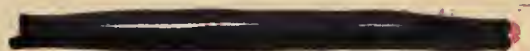


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MASTERPIECES OF
FRENCH FICTION

Crowned by

The Académie Française

Known as

“THE IMMORTALS”



48502

CINQ MARS

(VOL. II.)

By ALFRED DE VIGNY

Crowned by the French Academy

With a Preface by GASTON
BOISSIER, of the French
Academy, and Illustrations by
A. DUVIVIER



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PREFACE



CONSIDERING Alfred de Vigny first as a writer, it is evident that he wished the public to regard him as different from the other romanticists of his day; in fact, in many respects, his method presents a striking contrast to theirs. To their brilliant facility, their prodigious abundance, and the dazzling luxury of color in their pictures of life he opposes a style always simple, pure, clear, with delicacy of touch, careful drawing of character, correct locution, and absolute chastity. Yet, even though he had this marked regard for purity in literary style, no writer had more dislike of mere pedantry. His high ideal in literary art and his self-respect inspired him with an invincible repugnance toward the artificialities of style of that period, which the romanticists—above all, Chateaubriand, their master—had so much abused.

Every one knows of the singular declaration made by Chateaubriand to Joubert, while relating the details of a nocturnal voyage: "The moon shone upon me in a slender crescent, and that prevented me from writing an untruth, for I feel sure that had not the moon been there I should have said in my letter that it was shining, and then you would have convicted me of an error in my almanac!"

PREFACE

This habit of sacrificing truth and exactitude of impression, for the sake of producing a harmonious phrase or a picturesque suggestion, disgusted Alfred de Vigny. "The worst thing about writers is that they care very little whether what they write is true, so long as they only write," we read on one page of his *Journal*. He adds, "They should seek words only in their own consciences." On another page he says: "The most serious lack in literary work is *sincerity*. Perceiving clearly that the combination of technical labor and research for effective expression, in producing literary work, often leads us to a paradox, I have resolved to sacrifice all to conviction and truth, so that this precious element of sincerity, complete and profound, shall dominate my books and give to them the sacred character which the divine presence of truth always gives."

Besides sincerity, De Vigny possessed, in a high degree, a gift which was not less rare in that age—good taste. He had taste in the art of writing, a fine literary tact, a sense of proportion, a perception of delicate shades of expression, an instinct that told him what to say and what to suppress, to insinuate, or to be left to the understanding. Even in his innovations in form, in his boldness of style, he showed a rare discretion; never did he do violence to the genius of the French language, and one may apply to him without reserve the eulogy that Quintilian pronounced upon Horace: *Verbis felicissime audax*.

He cherished also a fixed principle that art implied selection. He was neither idealist nor realist, in the

PREFACE

exclusive and opposing sense in which we understand these terms; he recommended a scrupulous observance of nature, and that every writer should draw as close to it as possible, but only in order to interpret it, to reveal it with a true feeling, yet without a too intimate analysis, and that no one should attempt to portray it exactly or servilely copy it. "Of what use is art," he says, "if it is only a reduplication of existence? We see around us only too much of the sadness and disenchantment of reality." The three novels that compose the volume *Servitude et Grandeur militaire* are, in this respect, models of romantic composition that never will be surpassed, bearing witness to the truth of the formula followed by De Vigny in all his literary work: "Art is the chosen truth."

If, as a versifier, Alfred de Vigny does not equal the great poets of his time, if they are his superiors in distinction and brilliancy, in richness of vocabulary, freedom of movement, and variety of rhythm, the cause is to be ascribed less to any lack of poetic genius than to the nature of his inspiration, even to the laws of poesy, and to the secret and irreducible antinomy that exists between art and thought. When, for example, Théophile Gautier reproached him with being too little impressed with the exigencies of rhyme, his criticism was not well grounded, for richness of rhyme, though indispensable in works of descriptive imagination, has no *raison d'être* in poems dominated by sentiment and thought. But, having said that, we must recognize in his poetry an element, serious, strong, and impressive, characteristic of itself alone, and admire, in the stro-

PREFACE

phes of *Moïse*, in the imprecations of *Samson*, and in the *Destinées*, the majestic simplicity of the most beautiful Hebraic verse.

Moreover, the true originality of De Vigny does not lie in the manner of composition; it was primarily in the *rôle* of precursor that he played his part on the stage of literature. Let us imagine ourselves at the period about the beginning of the year 1822. Of the three poets who, in making their literary débuts, had just published the *Meditations*, *Poèmes antiques et modernes*, and *Odes*, only one had, at that time, the instinct of renewal in the spirit of French poesy, and a sense of the manner in which this must be accomplished; and that one was not Lamartine, and certainly it was not Victor Hugo.

Sainte-Beuve has said, with authority, that in Lamartine there is something suggestive of Millevoeye, of Voltaire (he of the charming epistles), and of Fontanes; and Victor Hugo wrote with very little variation from the technical form of his predecessors. "But with Alfred de Vigny," he says, "we seek in vain for a resemblance to any French poetry preceding his work. For example, where can we find anything resembling *Moïse*, *Eloa*, *Doloeida*? Where did he find his inspiration for style and composition in these poems? If the poets of the Pleiades of the Restoration seem to have found their inspiration within themselves, showing no trace of connection with the literature of the past, thus throwing into confusion old habits of taste and of routine, certain it is that among them Alfred de Vigny should be ranked first."

PREFACE

Even in the collection that bears the date of 1822, some years before the future author of *Légende des Siècles* had taken up romanticism, Alfred de Vigny had already conceived the idea of setting forth, in a series of little epics, the migrations of the human soul throughout the ages. "One feels," said he in his Preface, "a keen intellectual delight in transporting one's self, by mere force of thought, to a period of antiquity; it resembles the pleasure an old man feels in recalling first his early youth, and then the whole course of his life. In the age of simplicity, poetry was devoted entirely to the beauties of the physical forms of nature and of man; each step in advance that it has made since then toward our own day of civilization and of sadness, seems to have blended it more and more with our arts, and even with the sufferings of our souls. At present, with all the serious solemnity of Religion and of Destiny, it lends to them their chief beauty. Never discouraged, Poetry has followed Man in his long journey through the ages, like a sweet and beautiful companion. I have attempted, in our language, to show some of her beauties, in following her progress toward the present day."

The arrangement of the poems announced in this Preface is tripartite, like that of the *Légende des Siècles: Poèmes antiques, poèmes judaïques, poèmes modernes.— Livre mystique, livre antique, livre moderne*. But the name of precursor would be a vain title if all that were necessary to merit it was the fact that one had been the first to perceive a new path to literary glory, to salute it from a distance, yet never attempt to make a nearer approach.

PREFACE

In one direction at least, Alfred de Vigny was a true innovator, in the broadest and most meritorious sense of the word: he was the creator of philosophic poetry in France. Until *Jocelyn* appeared, in 1836, the form of poetic expression was confined chiefly to the ode, the ballad, and the elegy; and no poet, with the exception of the author of *Moïse* and *Eloa*, ever dreamed that abstract ideas and themes dealing with the moralities could be expressed in the melody of verse.

To this priority, of which he knew the full value, Alfred de Vigny laid insistent claim. "The only merit," he says in one of his prefaces, "that any one ever has disputed with me in this sort of composition is the honor of having promulgated in France all works of the kind in which philosophic thought is presented in either epic or dramatic form."

But it was not alone priority in the sense of time that gave him right of way over his contemporaries; he was the most distinguished representative of poetic philosophy of his generation. If the phrases of Lamartine seem richer, if his flight is more majestic, De Vigny's range is surer and more powerful. While the philosophy of the creator of *Les Harmonies* is uncertain and inconsistent, that of the poet of *Les Destinées* is strong and substantial, for the reason that the former inspires more sentiment than ideas, while the latter, soaring far above the narrow sphere of personal emotion, writes of everything that occupies the intellect of man.

Thus, by his vigor and breadth of thought, by his profound understanding of life, by the intensity of his dreams, Alfred de Vigny is superior to Victor Hugo,

PREFACE

whose genius was quite different, in his power to portray picturesque scenes, in his remarkable fecundity of imagination, and in his sovereign mastery of technique.

But nowhere in De Vigny's work is that superiority of poetic thought so clearly shown as in those productions wherein the point of departure was farthest from the domain of intellect, and better than any other has he understood that truth proclaimed by Hegel: "The passions of the soul and the affections of the heart are matter for poetic expression only in so far as they are general, solid, and eternal."

De Vigny was also the only one among our poets that had a lofty ideal of woman and of love. And in order to convince one's self of this it is sufficient to re-read successively the four great love-poems of that period: *Le Lac*, *La Tristesse d'Olympio*, *Le Souvenir*, and *La Colère de Samson*.

Lamartine's conception of love was a sort of mild ecstasy, the sacred rapture in which the senses play no part, and noble emotions that cause neither trouble nor remorse. He ever regarded love as a kind of sublime and passionate religion, of which *Le Lac* was the most beautiful hymn, but in which the image of woman is so vague that she almost seems to be absent.

On the other hand, what is *La Tristesse d'Olympio* if not an admirable but common poetic rapture, a magnificent summary of the sufferings of the heart—a bit of lyric writing equal to the most beautiful *canzoni* of the Italian masters, but wherein we find no idea of love, because all is artificial and studied; no cry from the soul is heard,—no trace of passion appears.

PREFACE

After another fashion the same criticism applies to *Le Souvenir*; it was written under a stress of emotion resulting from too recent events; and the imagination of the author, subservient to a memory relentlessly faithful, as is often the case with those to whom passion is the chief principle of inspiration, was far from fulfilling the duties of his high vocation, which is to purify the passions of the poet from individual and accidental characteristics in order to leave unhampered whatever his work may contain that is powerful and imperishable.

Alfred de Vigny alone, of the poets of his day, in his *Colère de Samson*, has risen to a just appreciation of woman and of love; his ideal is grand and tragic, it is true, and reminds one of that gloomy passage in Ecclesiastes which says: "Woman is more bitter than death, and her arms are like chains."

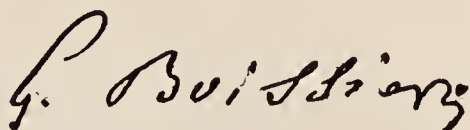
It is by this character of universality, of which all his writings show striking evidence, that Alfred de Vigny is assured of immortality. A heedless generation neglected him because it preferred to seek subjects in strong contrast to life of its own time. But that which was not appreciated by his contemporaries will be welcomed by posterity. And when, in French literature, there shall remain of true romanticism only a slight trace and the memory of a few great names, the author of the *Destinées* will still find an echo in all hearts.

No writer, no matter how gifted, immortalizes himself unless he has crystallized into expressive and original phrase the eternal sentiments and yearnings of the

PREFACE

human heart. "A man does not deserve the name of poet unless he can express personal feeling and emotion, and only that man is worthy to be called a poet who knows how to assimilate the varied emotions of mankind." If this fine phrase of Goethe's is true, if true poetry is only that which implies a mastery of spiritual things as well as of human emotion, Alfred de Vigny is assuredly one of our greatest poets, for none so well as he has realized a complete vision of the universe, no one has brought before the world with more boldness the problem of the soul and that of humanity. Under the title of poet he belongs not only to our national literature, but occupies a distinctive place in the world of intellect, with Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe, among those inspired beings who transmit throughout succeeding centuries the light of reason and the traditions of the loftiest poetic thought.

Alfred de Vigny was elected to a chair in the French Academy in 1846 and died at Paris, September 17, 1863.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "G. Boissier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Secrétaire Perpetuel de l'Académie Française.

CONTENTS

VOLUME II

CHAPTER XVIII

	PAGE
THE SECRET	I

CHAPTER XIX

THE HUNTING PARTY	10
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER XX

THE READING	44
-----------------------	----

CHAPTER XXI

THE CONFESSIONAL	70
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER XXII

THE STORM	84
---------------------	----

CHAPTER XXIII

ABSENCE	101
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WORK	112
--------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXV

THE PRISONERS	146
-------------------------	-----

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XXVI

	PAGE
THE FÊTE	183
NOTES	205

SHORT STORY

LAURETTE	253
--------------------	-----

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Alfred de Vigny (<i>portrait</i>)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
He drew him toward the bust of Louis XIII	8
“Where are you going? What is the matter?” he cried . . .	82

CINQ-MARS

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SECRET

Et prononcés ensemble, à l'amitié fidèle,
Nos deux noms fraternels serviront de modèle.

A. SOUMET, *Clytèmnestre*.



DE THOU had reached home with his friend; his doors were carefully shut, and orders given to admit no one, and to excuse him to the refugees for allowing them to depart without seeing them again; and as yet the two friends had not spoken to each other.

The counsellor had thrown himself into his arm-chair in deep meditation. Cinq-Mars, leaning against the lofty chimney-piece, awaited with a serious and sorrowful air the termination of this silence. At length De Thou, looking fixedly at him and crossing his arms, said in a hollow and melancholy voice:

“This, then, is the goal you have reached! These, then, are the consequences of your ambition! You are about to banish, perhaps slay, a man, and to bring a foreign army into France; I am, then, to see you an

ALFRED DE VIGNY

assassin and a traitor to your country! By what tortuous paths have you arrived thus far? By what stages have you descended so low?"

"Any other than yourself would not speak thus to me twice," said Cinq-Mars, coldly; "but I know you, and I like this explanation. I desired it, and sought it. You shall see my entire soul. I had at first another thought, a better one perhaps, more worthy of our friendship, more worthy of friendship—friendship, the second thing upon earth."

He raised his eyes to heaven as he spoke, as if he there sought the divinity.

"Yes, it would have been better. I intended to have said nothing to you on the subject. It was a painful task to keep silence; but hitherto I have succeeded. I wished to have conducted the whole enterprise without you; to show you only the finished work. I wished to keep you beyond the circle of my danger; but shall I confess my weakness? I feared to die, if I have to die, misjudged by you. I can well sustain the idea of the world's malediction, but not of yours; but this has decided me upon avowing all to you."

"What! and but for this thought, you would have had the courage to conceal yourself forever from me? Ah, dear Henri, what have I done that you should take this care of my life? By what fault have I deserved to survive you, if you die? You have had the strength of mind to hoodwink me for two whole years; you have never shown me aught of your life but its flowers; you have never entered my solitude but with

CINQ-MARS

a joyous countenance, and each time with a fresh favor. Ah, you must be very guilty or very virtuous!"

"Do not seek in my soul more than therein lies. Yes, I have deceived you; and that fact was the only peace and joy I had in the world. Forgive me for having stolen these moments from my destiny, so brilliant, alas! I was happy in the happiness you supposed me to enjoy; I made you happy in that dream, and I am only guilty in that I am now about to destroy it, and to show myself as I was and am. Listen: I shall not detain you long; the story of an impassioned heart is ever simple. Once before, I remember, in my tent when I was wounded, my secret nearly escaped me; it would have been happy, perhaps, had it done so. Yet what would counsel have availed me? I should not have followed it. In a word, 'tis Marie de Mantua whom I love."

"How! she who is to be Queen of Poland?"

"If she is ever queen, it can only be after my death. But listen: for her I became a courtier; for her I have almost reigned in France; for her I am about to fall—perhaps to die."

"Die! fall! when I have been reproaching your triumph! when I have wept over the sadness of your victory!"

"Ah! you know me but ill, if you suppose that I shall be the dupe of Fortune, when she smiles upon me; if you suppose that I have not pierced to the bottom of my destiny! I struggle against it, but 'tis the stronger I feel it. I have undertaken a task beyond human power; and I shall fail in it."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Why, then, not stop? What is the use of intellect in the business of the world?”

“None; unless, indeed, it be to tell us the cause of our fall, and to enable us to foresee the day on which we shall fall. I can not now recede. When a man is confronted with such an enemy as Richelieu, he must overcome him or be crushed by him. To-morrow I shall strike the last blow; did I not just now, in your presence, engage to do so?”

“And it is that very engagement that I would oppose. What confidence have you in those to whom you thus abandon your life? Have you not read their secret thoughts?”

“I know them all; I have read their hopes through their feigned rage; I know that they tremble while they threaten. I know that even now they are ready to make their peace by giving me up; but it is my part to sustain them and to decide the King. I must do it, for Marie is my betrothed, and my death is written at Narbonne. It is voluntarily, it is with full knowledge of my fate, that I have thus placed myself between the block and supreme happiness. That happiness I must tear from the hands of Fortune, or die on that scaffold. At this instant I experience the joy of having broken down all doubt. What! blush you not at having thought me ambitious from a base egoism, like this Cardinal—ambitious from a puerile desire for a power which is never satisfied? I am ambitious, but it is because I love. Yes, I love; in that word all is comprised. But I accuse you unjustly. You have embellished my secret intentions;

CINQ-MARS

you have imparted to me noble designs (I remember them), high political conceptions. They are brilliant, they are grand, doubtless; but—shall I say it to you?—such vague projects for the perfecting of corrupt societies seem to me to crawl far below the devotion of love. When the whole soul vibrates with that one thought, it has no room for the nice calculation of general interests; the topmost heights of earth are far beneath heaven.”

De Thou shook his head.

“What can I answer?” he said. “I do not understand you; your reasoning unreasons you. You hunt a shadow.”

“Nay,” continued Cinq-Mars; “far from destroying my strength, this inward fire has developed it. I have calculated everything. Slow steps have led me to the end which I am about to attain. Marie drew me by the hand; could I retreat? I would not have done it though a world faced me. Hitherto, all has gone well; but an invisible barrier arrests me. This barrier must be broken; it is Richelieu. But now in your presence I undertook to do this; but perhaps I was too hasty. I now think I was so. Let him rejoice; he expected me. Doubtless he foresaw that it would be the youngest whose patience would first fail. If he played on this calculation, he played well. Yet but for the love that has urged me on, I should have been stronger than he, and by just means.”

Then a sudden change came over the face of Cinq-Mars. He turned pale and red twice; and the veins

ALFRED DE VIGNY

of his forehead rose like blue lines drawn by an invisible hand.

“Yes,” he added, rising, and clasping together his hands with a force which indicated the violent despair concentrated in his heart, “all the torments with which love can tear its victims I have felt in my breast. This timid girl, for whom I would shake empires, for whom I have suffered all, even the favor of a prince, who perhaps has not felt all I have done for her, can not yet be mine. She is mine before God, yet I am estranged from her; nay, I must hear daily discussed before me which of the thrones of Europe will best suit her, in conversations wherein I may not even raise my voice to give an opinion, and in which they scorn as mate for her princes of the blood royal, who yet have precedence far before me. I must conceal myself like a culprit to hear through a grating the voice of her who is my wife; in public I must bow before her—her husband, yet her servant! ’Tis too much; I can not live thus. I must take the last step, whether it elevate me or hurl me down.”

“And for your personal happiness you would overthrow a State?”

“The happiness of the State is one with mine. I secure that undoubtedly in destroying the tyrant of the King. The horror with which this man inspires me has passed into my very blood. When I was first on my way to him, I encountered in my journey his greatest crime. He is the genius of evil for the unhappy King! I will exorcise him. I might have become the genius of good for Louis XIII. It was

CINQ-MARS

one of the thoughts of Marie, her most cherished thought. But I do not think I shall triumph in the uneasy soul of the Prince."

"Upon what do you rely, then?" said De Thou.

"Upon the cast of a die. If his will can but once last for a few hours, I have gained. 'Tis a last calculation on which my destiny hangs."

"And that of your Marie!"

"Could you suppose it?" said Cinq-Mars, impetuously. "No, no! If he abandons me, I sign the treaty with Spain, and then—war!"

"Ah, horror!" exclaimed the counsellor. "What, a war! a civil war, and a foreign alliance!"

"Ay, 'tis a crime," said Cinq-Mars, coldly; "but have I asked you to participate in it?"

"Cruel, ungrateful man!" replied his friend; "can you speak to me thus? Know you not, have I not proved to you, that friendship holds the place of every passion in my heart? Can I survive the least of your misfortunes, far less your death. Still, let me influence you not to strike France. Oh, my friend! my only friend! I implore you on my knees, let us not thus be parricides; let us not assassinate our country! I say *us*, because I will never separate myself from your actions. Preserve to me my self-esteem, for which I have labored so long; sully not my life and my death, which are both yours."

De Thou had fallen at the feet of his friend, who, unable to preserve his affected coldness, threw himself into his arms, as he raised him, and, pressing him to his heart, said in a stifled voice:

ALERED DE VIGNY

“Why love me thus? What have you done, friend? Why love me? You who are wise, pure, and virtuous; you who are not led away by an insensate passion and the desire for vengeance; you whose soul is nourished only by religion and science—why love me? What has my friendship given you but anxiety and pain? Must it now heap dangers on you? Separate yourself from me; we are no longer of the same nature. You see courts have corrupted me. I have no longer openness, no longer goodness. I meditate the ruin of a man; I can deceive a friend. Forget me, scorn me. I am not worthy of one of your thoughts; how should I be worthy of your perils?”

“By swearing to me not to betray the King and France,” answered De Thou. “Know you that the preservation of your country is at stake; that if you yield to Spain our fortifications, she will never return them to us; that your name will be a byword with posterity; that French mothers will curse it when they shall be forced to teach their children a foreign language—know you all this? Come.”

And he drew him toward the bust of Louis XIII.

“Swear before him (he is your friend also), swear never to sign this infamous treaty.”

Cinq-Mars lowered his eyes, but with dogged tenacity answered, although blushing as he did so:

“I have said it; if they force me to it, I will sign.”

De Thou turned pale, and let fall his hand. He took two turns in his room, his arms crossed, in inexpressible anguish. At last he advanced solemnly toward the bust of his father, and opened a large book



CINQ-MARS

standing at its foot; he turned to a page already marked, and read aloud:

“I think, therefore, that M. de Lignebœuf was justly condemned to death by the Parliament of Rouen, for not having revealed the conspiracy of Catteville against the State.”

Then keeping the book respectfully opened in his hand, and contemplating the image of the President de Thou, whose *Memoirs* he held, he continued:

“Yes, my father, you thought well. I shall be a criminal, I shall merit death; but can I do otherwise? I will not denounce this traitor, because that also would be treason; and he is my friend, and he is unhappy.”

Then, advancing toward Cinq-Mars, and again taking his hand, he said:

“I do much for you in acting thus; but expect nothing further from me, Monsieur, if you sign this treaty.”

Cinq-Mars was moved to the heart's core by this scene, for he felt all that his friend must suffer in casting him off. Checking, however, the tears which were rising to his smarting lids, and embracing De Thou tenderly, he exclaimed:

“Ah, De Thou, I find you still perfect. Yes, you do me a service in alienating yourself from me, for if your lot had been linked to mine, I should not have dared to dispose of my life. I should have hesitated to sacrifice it in case of need; but now I shall assuredly do so. And I repeat to you, if they force me, I shall sign the treaty with Spain.”

CHAPTER XIX

THE HUNTING PARTY

On a bien des grâces à rendre à son étoile quand on peut quitter les hommes sans être obligé de leur faire du mal et de se déclarer leur ennemi.—CH. NODIER, *Jean Sbogar*.



MEANWHILE the illness of Louis XIII threw France into the apprehension which unsettled States ever feel on the approach of the death of princes. Although Richelieu was the hub of the monarchy, he reigned only in the name of Louis, though enveloped with the splendor of the name which he had assumed. Absolute as he was over his master, Richelieu still feared him; and this fear reassured the nation against his ambitious desires, to which the King himself was the fixed barrier. But this prince dead, what would the imperious minister do? Where would a man stop who had already dared so much?

Accustomed to wield the sceptre, who would prevent him from still holding it, and from subscribing his name alone to laws which he alone would dictate? These fears agitated all minds. The people in vain looked throughout the kingdom for those pillars of the nobility, at the feet of whom they had been wont to find shelter in political storms. They now

CINQ-MARS

only saw their recent tombs. Parliament was dumb; and men felt that nothing could be opposed to the monstrous growth of the Cardinal's usurping power. No one was entirely deceived by the affected sufferings of the minister. None was touched with that feigned agony which had too often deceived the public hope; and distance nowhere prevented the weight of the dreaded *parvenu* from being felt.

The love of the people soon revived toward the son of Henri IV. They hastened to the churches; they prayed, and even wept. Unfortunate princes are always loved. The melancholy of Louis, and his mysterious sorrow interested all France; still living, they already regretted him, as if each man desired to be the depositary of his troubles ere he carried away with him the grand mystery of what is suffered by men placed so high that they can see nothing before them but their tomb.

The King, wishing to reassure the whole nation, announced the temporary reëstablishment of his health, and ordered the court to prepare for a grand hunting party to be given at Chambord—a royal domain, whither his brother, the Duc d'Orléans, prayed him to return.

This beautiful abode was the favorite retreat of Louis, doubtless because, in harmony with his feelings, it combined grandeur with sadness. He often passed whole months there, without seeing any one whatsoever, incessantly reading and re-reading mysterious papers, writing unknown documents, which he locked up in an iron coffer, of which he alone

ALFRED DE VIGNY

had the key. He sometimes delighted in being served by a single domestic, and thus so to forget himself by the absence of his suite as to live for many days together like a poor man or an exiled citizen, loving to figure to himself misery or persecution, in order the better to enjoy royalty afterward. Another time he would be in a more entire solitude; and having forbidden any human creature to approach him, clothed in the habit of a monk, he would shut himself up in the vaulted chapel. There, reading the life of Charles V, he would imagine himself at St. Just, and chant over himself that mass for the dead which brought death upon the head of the Spanish monarch.

But in the midst of these very chants and meditations his feeble mind was pursued and distracted by contrary images. Never did life and the world appear to him more fair than in such times of solitude among the tombs. Between his eyes and the page which he endeavored to read passed brilliant processions, victorious armies, or nations transported with love. He saw himself powerful, combating, triumphant, adored; and if a ray of the sun through the large windows fell upon him, suddenly rising from the foot of the altar, he felt himself carried away by a thirst for daylight and the open air, which led him from his gloomy retreat. But returned to real life, he found there once more disgust and *ennui*, for the first men he met recalled his power to his recollection by their homage.

It was then that he believed in friendship, and summoned it to his side; but scarcely was he certain of its possession than unconquerable scruples suddenly

CINQ-MARS

seized upon his soul—scruples concerning a too powerful attachment to the creature, turning him from the Creator, and frequently inward reproaches for removing himself too much from the affairs of the State. The object of his momentary affection then seemed to him a despotic being, whose power drew him from his duties; but, unfortunately for his favorites, he had not the strength of mind outwardly to manifest toward them the resentment he felt, and thus to warn them of their danger, but, continuing to caress them, he added by this constraint fuel to the secret fire of his heart, and was impelled to an absolute hatred of them. There were moments when he was capable of taking any measures against them.

Cinq-Mars knew perfectly the weakness of that mind, which could not keep firmly in any path, and the weakness of a heart which could neither wholly love nor wholly hate. Thus, the position of favorite, the envy of all France, the object of jealousy even on the part of the great minister, was so precarious and so painful that, but for his love, he would have burst his golden chains with greater joy than a galley-slave feels when he sees the last ring that for two long years he has been filing with a steel spring concealed in his mouth, fall to the earth. This impatience to meet the fate he saw so near hastened the explosion of that patiently prepared mine, as he had declared to his friend; but his situation was that of a man who, placed by the side of the book of life, should see hovering over it the hand which is to indite his damnation or his salvation. He set out with Louis to Cham-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

bord, resolved to take the first opportunity favorable to his design. It soon presented itself.

The very morning of the day appointed for the chase, the King sent word to him that he was waiting for him on the Escalier du Lys. It may not, perhaps, be out of place to speak of this astonishing construction.

Four leagues from Blois, and one league from the Loire, in a small and deep valley, between marshy swamps and a forest of large holm-oaks, far from any highroad, the traveller suddenly comes upon a royal, nay, a magic castle. It might be said that, compelled by some wonderful lamp, a genie of the East had carried it off during one of the "thousand and one nights," and had brought it from the country of the sun to hide it in the land of fogs and mist, for the dwelling of the mistress of a handsome prince.

Hidden like a treasure; with its blue domes, its elegant minarets rising from thick walls or shooting into the air, its long terraces overlooking the wood, its light spires bending with the wind, its terraces everywhere rising over its colonnades, one might there imagine one's self in the kingdom of Bagdad or of Cashmir, did not the blackened walls, with their covering of moss and ivy, and the pallid and melancholy hue of the sky, denote a rainy climate. It was indeed a genius who raised this building; but he came from Italy, and his name was Primaticcio. It was indeed a handsome prince whose amours were concealed in it; but he was a king, and he bore the name of François I. His salamander still spouts fire everywhere

CINQ-MARS

about it. It sparkles in a thousand places on the arched roofs, and multiplies the flames there like the stars of heaven; it supports the capitals with burning crowns; it colors the windows with its fires; it meanders up and down the secret staircases, and everywhere seems to devour with its flaming glances the triple crescent of a mysterious Diane—that Diane de Poitiers, twice a goddess and twice adored in these voluptuous woods.

The base of this strange monument is like the monument itself, full of elegance and mystery; there is a double staircase, which rises in two interwoven spirals from the most remote foundations of the edifice up to the highest points, and ends in a lantern or small lattice-work cabinet, surmounted by a colossal *fleur-de-lys*, visible from a great distance. Two men may ascend it at the same moment, without seeing each other.

This staircase alone seems like a little isolated temple. Like our churches, it is sustained and protected by the arcades of its thin, light, transparent, open-work wings. One would think the docile stone had given itself to the finger of the architect; it seems, so to speak, kneaded according to the slightest caprice of his imagination. One can hardly conceive how the plans were traced, in what terms the orders were explained to the workmen. The whole thing appears a transient thought, a brilliant revery that at once assumed a durable form—the realization of a dream.

Cinq-Mars was slowly ascending the broad stairs which led him to the King's presence, and stopping

ALFRED DE VIGNY

longer at each step, in proportion as he approached him, either from disgust at the idea of seeing the Prince whose daily complaints he had to hear, or thinking of what he was about to do, when the sound of a guitar struck his ear. He recognized the beloved instrument of Louis and his sad, feeble, and trembling voice faintly reëchoing from the vaulted ceiling. Louis seemed trying one of those romances which he was wont to compose, and several times repeated an incomplete strain with a trembling hand. The words could scarcely be distinguished; all that Cinq-Mars heard were a few such as *Abandon, ennui de monde, et belle flamme*.

The young favorite shrugged his shoulders as he listened.

“What new chagrin moves thee?” he said. “Come, let me again attempt to read that chilled heart which thinks it needs something.”

He entered the narrow cabinet.

Clothed in black, half reclining on a couch, his elbows resting upon pillows, the Prince was languidly touching the chords of his guitar; he ceased this when he saw the *grand écuyer* enter, and, raising his large eyes to him with an air of reproach, swayed his head to and fro for a long time without speaking. Then in a plaintive but emphatic tone, he said:

“What do I hear, Cinq-Mars? What do I hear of your conduct? How much you do pain me by forgetting all my counsels! You have formed a guilty intrigue; was it from you I was to expect such things—you whom I so loved for your piety and virtue?”

CINQ-MARS

Full of his political projects, Cinq-Mars thought himself discovered, and could not help a momentary anxiety; but, perfectly master of himself, he answered without hesitation:

“Yes, Sire; and I was about to declare it to you, for I am accustomed to open my soul to you.”

“Declare it to me!” exclaimed the King, turning red and white, as under the shivering of a fever; “and you dare to contaminate my ears with these horrible avowals, Monsieur, and to speak so calmly of your disorder! Go! you deserve to be condemned to the galley, like Rondin; it is a crime of high treason you have committed in your want of faith toward me. I had rather you were a coiner, like the Marquis de Coucy, or at the head of the Croquants, than do as you have done; you dishonor your family, and the memory of the *maréchal* your father.”

Cinq-Mars, deeming himself wholly lost, put the best face he could upon the matter, and said with an air of resignation:

“Well, then, Sire, send me to be judged and put to death; but spare me your reproaches.”

“Do you insult me, you petty country-squire?” answered Louis. “I know very well that you have not incurred the penalty of death in the eyes of men; but it is at the tribunal of God, Monsieur, that you will be judged.”

“Heavens, Sire!” replied the impetuous young man, whom the insulting phrase of the King had offended, “why do you not allow me to return to the province you so much despise, as I have sought to do a hun-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

dred times? I will go there. I can not support the life I lead with you; an angel could not bear it. Once more, let me be judged if I am guilty, or allow me to return to Touraine. It is you who have ruined me in attaching me to your person. If you have caused me to conceive lofty hopes, which you afterward overthrew, is that my fault? Wherefore have you made me *grand écuyer*, if I was not to rise higher? In a word, am I your friend or not? and, if I am, why may I not be duke, peer, or even constable, as well as Monsieur de Luynes, whom you loved so much because he trained falcons for you? Why am I not admitted to the council? I could speak as well as any of the old ruffs there; I have new ideas, and a better arm to serve you. It is your Cardinal who has prevented you from summoning me there. And it is because he keeps you from me that I detest him," continued Cinq-Mars, clinching his fist, as if Richelieu stood before him; "yes, I would kill him with my own hand, if need were."

D'Effiat's eyes were inflamed with anger; he stamped his foot as he spoke, and turned his back to the King, like a sulky child, leaning against one of the columns of the cupola.

Louis, who recoiled before all resolution, and who was always terrified by the irreparable, took his hand.

O weakness of power! O caprices of the human heart! it was by this childish impetuosity, these very defects of his age, that this young man governed the King of France as effectually as did the first politician of the time. This Prince believed, and with some

CINQ-MARS

show of reason, that a character so hasty must be sincere; and even his fiery rage did not anger him. It did not apply to the real subject of his reproaches, and he could well pardon him for hating the Cardinal. The very idea of his favorite's jealousy of the minister pleased him, because it indicated attachment; and all he dreaded was his indifference. Cinq-Mars knew this, and had desired to make it a means of escape, preparing the King to regard all that he had done as child's play, as the consequence of his friendship for him; but the danger was not so great, and he breathed freely when the Prince said to him:

"The Cardinal is not in question here. I love him no more than you do; but it is with your scandalous conduct I reproach you, and which I shall have much difficulty to pardon in you. What, Monsieur! I learn that instead of devoting yourself to the pious exercises to which I have accustomed you, when I fancy you are at your *Salut* or your *Angelus*—you are off from Saint Germain, and go to pass a portion of the night—with whom? Dare I speak of it without sin? With a woman lost in reputation, who can have no relations with you but such as are pernicious to the safety of your soul, and who receives free-thinkers at her house—in a word, Marion de Lorme. What have you to say? Speak."

Leaving his hand in that of the King, but still leaning against the column, Cinq-Mars answered:

"Is it then so culpable to leave grave occupations for others more serious still? If I go to the house of Marion de Lorme, it is to hear the conversation of

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the learned men who assemble there. Nothing is more harmless than these meetings. Readings are given there which, it is true, sometimes extend far into the night, but which commonly tend to exalt the soul, so far from corrupting it. Besides, you have never commanded me to account to you for all that I do; I should have informed you of this long ago if you had desired it."

"Ah, Cinq-Mars, Cinq-Mars! where is your confidence? Do you feel no need of it? It is the first condition of a perfect friendship, such as ours ought to be, such as my heart requires."

The voice of Louis became more affectionate, and the favorite, looking at him over his shoulder, assumed an air less angry, but still simply *ennuyé*, and resigned to listening to him.

"How often have you deceived me!" continued the King; "can I trust myself to you? Are they not fops and gallants whom you meet at the house of this woman? Do not courtesans go there?"

"Heavens! no, Sire; I often go there with one of my friends—a gentleman of Touraine, named René Descartes."

"Descartes! I know that name! Yes, he is an officer who distinguished himself at the siege of Rochelle, and who dabbles in writing; he has a good reputation for piety, but he is connected with Desbarreaux, who is a free-thinker. I am sure that you must mix with many persons who are not fit company for you, many young men without family, without birth. Come, tell me whom saw you last there?"

CINQ-MARS

"Truly, I can scarcely remember their names," said Cinq-Mars, looking at the ceiling; "sometimes I do not even ask them. There was, in the first place, a certain Monsieur—Monsieur Groot, or Grotius, a Hollander."

"I know him, a friend of Barnevelt; I pay him a pension. I liked him well enough; but the Card—but I was told that he was a high Calvinist."

"I also saw an Englishman, named John Milton; he is a young man just come from Italy, and is returning to London. He scarcely speaks at all."

"I don't know him—not at all; but I'm sure he's some other Calvinist. And the Frenchmen, who were they?"

"The young man who wrote *Cinna*, and who has been thrice rejected at the Académie Française; he was angry that Du Royer occupied his place there. He is called Corneille."

"Well," said the King, folding his arms, and looking at him with an air of triumph and reproach, "I ask you who are these people? Is it in such a circle that you ought to be seen?"

Cinq-Mars was confounded at this observation, which hurt his self-pride, and, approaching the King, he said:

"You are right, Sire; but there can be no harm in passing an hour or two in listening to good conversation. Besides, many courtiers go there, such as the Duc de Bouillon, Monsieur d'Aubijoux, the Comte de Brion, the Cardinal de la Vallette, Messieurs de Mont-résor, Fontrailles; men illustrious in the sciences, as

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Mairet, Colletet, Desmarets, author of *Araine*; Faret, Doujat, Charpentier, who wrote the *Cyropédie*; Giry, Besons, and Baro, the continuer of *Astrée*—all academicians.”

“Ah! now, indeed, here are men of real merit,” said Louis; “there is nothing to be said against them. One can not but gain from their society. Theirs are settled reputations; they’re men of weight. Come, let us make up; shake hands, child. I permit you to go there sometimes, but do not deceive me any more; you see I know all. Look at this.”

So saying, the King took from a great iron chest set against the wall enormous packets of paper scribbled over with very fine writing. Upon one was written, *Baradas*, upon another, *D’Hautefort*, upon a third, *La Fayette*, and finally, *Cinq-Mars*. He stopped at the latter, and continued:

“See how many times you have deceived me! These are the continual faults of which I have myself kept a register during the two years I have known you; I have written out our conversations day by day. Sit down.”

Cinq-Mars obeyed with a sigh, and had the patience for two long hours to listen to a summary of what his master had had the patience to write during the course of two years. He yawned many times during the reading, as no doubt we should all do, were it needful to report this dialogue, which was found in perfect order, with his will, at the death of the King. We shall only say that he finished thus:

“In fine, hear what you did on the seventh of De-

CINQ-MARS

cember, three days ago. I was speaking to you of the flight of the hawk, and of the knowledge of hunting, in which you are deficient. I said to you, on the authority of *La Chasse Royale*, a work of King Charles IX, that after the hunter has accustomed his dog to follow a beast, he must consider him as of himself desirous of returning to the wood, and the dog must not be rebuked or struck in order to make him follow the track well; and that in order to teach a dog to set well, creatures that are not game must not be allowed to pass or run, nor must any scents be missed, without putting his nose to them.

“Hear what you replied to me (and in a tone of ill-humor—mind that!)—‘*Ma foi !* Sire, give me rather regiments to conduct than birds and dogs. I am sure that people would laugh at you and me if they knew how we occupy ourselves.’ And on the eighth—wait, yes, on the eighth—while we were singing vespers together in my chambers, you threw your book angrily into the fire, which was an impiety; and afterward you told me that you had let it drop—a sin, a mortal sin. See, I have written below, *lie*, underlined. People never deceive me, I assure you.”

“But, Sire——”

“Wait a moment! wait a moment! In the evening you told me the Cardinal had burned a man unjustly, and out of personal hatred.”

“And I repeat it, and maintain it, and will prove it, Sire. It is the greatest crime of all of that man whom you hesitate to disgrace, and who renders you unhappy. I myself saw all, heard all, at Loudun.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Urbain Grandier was assassinated, rather than tried. Hold, Sire, since you have there all those memoranda in your own hand, merely reperuse the proofs which I then gave you of it."

Louis, seeking the page indicated, and going back to the journey from Perpignan to Paris, read the whole narrative with attention, exclaiming:

"What horrors! How is it that I have forgotten all this? This man fascinates me; that's certain. You are my true friend, Cinq-Mars. What horrors! My reign will be stained by them. What! he prevented the letters of all the nobility and notables of the district from reaching me! Burn, burn alive! without proofs! for revenge! A man, a people have invoked my name in vain; a family curses me! Oh, how unhappy are kings!"

And the Prince, as he concluded, threw aside his papers and wept.

"Ah, Sire, those are blessed tears that you weep!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, with sincere admiration. "Would that all France were here with me! She would be astonished at this spectacle, and would scarcely believe it."

"Astonished! France, then, does not know me?"

"No, Sire," said D'Effiat, frankly; "no one knows you. And I myself, with the rest of the world, at times accuse you of coldness and indifference."

"Of coldness, when I am dying with sorrow! Of coldness, when I have immolated myself to their interests! Ungrateful nation! I have sacrificed all to it, even pride, even the happiness of guiding it myself,

CINQ-MARS

because I feared on its account for my fluctuating life. I have given my sceptre to be borne by a man I hate, because I believed his hand to be stronger than my own. I have endured the ill he has done to myself, thinking that he did good to my people. I have hidden my own tears to dry theirs; and I see that my sacrifice has been even greater than I thought it, for they have not perceived it. They have believed me incapable because I was kind, and without power because I mistrusted my own. But, no matter! God sees and knows me!"

"Ah, Sire, show yourself to France such as you are; re-assume your usurped power. France will do for your love what she would never do from fear. Return to life, and re-ascend the throne."

"No, no; my life is well-nigh finished, my dear friend. I am no longer capable of the labor of supreme command."

"Ah, Sire, this persuasion alone destroys your vigor. It is time that men should cease to confound power with crime, and call this union genius. Let your voice be heard proclaiming to the world that the reign of virtue is about to begin with your own; and henceforth those enemies whom vice has so much difficulty in suppressing will fall before a word uttered from your heart. No one has as yet calculated all that the good faith of a king of France may do for his people—that people who are drawn so instantaneously toward all that is good and beautiful, by their imagination and warmth of soul, and who are always ready **with** every kind of devotion. The King, your father,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

led us with a smile. What would not one of your tears do?"

During this address the King, very much surprised, frequently reddened, hemmed, and gave signs of great embarrassment, as always happened when any attempt was made to bring him to a decision. He also felt the approach of a conversation of too high an order, which the timidity of his soul forbade him to venture upon; and repeatedly putting his hand to his chest, knitting his brows as if suffering violent pain, he endeavored to relieve himself by the apparent attack of illness from the embarrassment of answering. But, either from passion, or from a resolution to strike the crowning blow, Cinq-Mars went on calmly and with a solemnity that awed Louis, who, forced into his last intrenchments, at length said:

"But, Cinq-Mars, how can I rid myself of a minister who for eighteen years past has surrounded me with his creatures?"

"He is not so very powerful," replied the *grand écuyer*; "and his friends will be his most sure enemies if you but make a sign of your head. The ancient league of the *princes of peace* still exists, Sire, and it is only the respect due to the choice of your Majesty that prevents it from manifesting itself."

"Ah, *mon Dieu!* thou mayst tell them not to stop on my account. I would not restrain them; they surely do not accuse me of being a Cardinalist. If my brother will give me the means of replacing Riche-lieu, I will adopt them with all my heart."

"I believe, Sire, that he will to-day speak to you of

CINQ-MARS

Monsieur le Duc de Bouillon. All the Royalists demand him."

"I don't dislike him," said the King, arranging his pillows; "I don't dislike him at all, although he is somewhat factious. We are relatives. Knowest thou, *cher ami*"—and he placed on this favorite expression more emphasis than usual—"knowest thou that he is descended in direct line from Saint Louis, by Charlotte de Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Montpensier? Knowest thou that seven princes of the blood royal have been united to his house; and eight daughters of his family, one of whom was a queen, have been married to princes of the blood royal? Oh, I don't at all dislike him! I have never said so, never!"

"Well, Sire," said Cinq-Mars, with confidence, "Monsieur and he will explain to you during the hunt how all is prepared, who are the men that may be put in the place of his creatures, who the field-m Marshals and the colonels who may be depended upon against Fabert and the Cardinalists of Perpignan. You will see that the minister has very few for him.

"The Queen, Monsieur, the nobility, and the parliaments are on our side; and the thing is done from the moment that your Majesty is not opposed to it. It has been proposed to get rid of the Cardinal as the Maréchal d'Ancre was got rid of, who deserved it less than he."

"As Concini?" said the King. "Oh, no, it must not be. I positively can not consent to it. He is a priest and a cardinal. We shall be excommunicated. But if there be any other means, I am very willing.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Thou mayest speak of it to thy friends; and I on my side will think of the matter."

The word once spoken, the King gave himself up to his resentment, as if he had satisfied it, as if the blow were already struck. Cinq-Mars was vexed to see this, for he feared that his anger thus vented might not be of long duration. However, he put faith in his last words, especially when, after numberless complaints, Louis added:

"And would you believe that though now for two years I have mourned my mother, ever since that day when he so cruelly mocked me before my whole court by asking for her recall when he knew she was dead—ever since that day I have been trying in vain to get them to bury her in France with my fathers? He has exiled even her ashes."

At this moment Cinq-Mars thought he heard a sound on the staircase; the King reddened.

"Go," he said; "go! Make haste and prepare for the hunt! Thou wilt ride next to my carriage. Go quickly! I desire it; go!"

And he himself pushed Cinq-Mars toward the entrance by which he had come.

The favorite went out; but his master's anxiety had not escaped him.

He slowly descended, and tried to divine the cause of it in his mind, when he thought he heard the sound of feet ascending the other staircase. He stopped; they stopped. He re-ascended; they seemed to him to descend. He knew that nothing could be seen between the interstices of the architecture; and he

CINQ-MARS

quitted the place, impatient and very uneasy, and determined to remain at the door of the entrance to see who should come out. But he had scarcely raised the tapestry which veiled the entrance to the guard-room than he was surrounded by a crowd of courtiers who had been awaiting him, and was fain to proceed to the work of issuing the orders connected with his post, or to receive respects, communications, solicitations, presentations, recommendations, embraces—to observe that infinitude of relations which surround a favorite, and which require constant and sustained attention, for any absence of mind might cause great misfortunes. He thus almost forgot the trifling circumstance which had made him uneasy, and which he thought might after all have only been a freak of the imagination. Giving himself up to the sweets of a kind of continual apotheosis, he mounted his horse in the great courtyard, attended by noble pages, and surrounded by brilliant gentlemen.

Monsieur soon arrived, followed by his people; and in an hour the King appeared, pale, languishing, and supported by four men. Cinq-Mars, dismounting, assisted him into a kind of small and very low carriage, called a *brouette*, and the horses of which, very docile and quiet ones, the King himself drove. The prickers on foot at the doors held the dogs in leash; and at the sound of the horn scores of young nobles mounted, and all set out to the place of meeting.

It was a farm called L'Ormage that the King had fixed upon; and the court, accustomed to his ways, followed the many roads of the park, while the King

ALFRED DE VIGNY

slowly followed an isolated path, having at his side the *grand écuyer* and four persons whom he had signed to approach him.

The aspect of this pleasure party was sinister. The approach of winter had stripped well-nigh all the leaves from the great oaks in the park, whose dark branches now stood up against a gray sky, like branches of funereal candelabra. A light fog seemed to indicate rain; through the melancholy boughs of the thinned wood the heavy carriages of the court were seen slowly passing on, filled with women, uniformly dressed in black, and obliged to await the result of a chase which they did not witness. The distant hounds gave tongue, and the horn was sometimes faintly heard like a sigh. A cold, cutting wind compelled every man to don cloaks, and some of the women, putting over their faces a veil or mask of black velvet to keep themselves from the air which the curtains of their carriages did not intercept (for there were no glasses at that time), seemed to wear what is called a domino. All was languishing and sad. The only relief was that ever and anon groups of young men in the excitement of the chase flew down the avenue like the wind, cheering on the dogs or sounding their horns. Then all again became silent, as after the discharge of fireworks the sky appears darker than before.

In a path, parallel with that followed by the King, were several courtiers enveloped in their cloaks. Appearing little intent upon the stag, they rode step for step with the King's *brouette*, and never lost sight of him. They conversed in low tones.

CINQ-MARS

“Excellent! Fontrailles, excellent! victory! The King takes his arm every moment. See how he smiles upon him! See! Monsieur le Grand dismounts and gets into the *brouette* by his side. Come, come, the old fox is done at last!”

“Ah, that’s nothing! Did you not see how the King shook hands with Monsieur? He’s made a sign to you, Montrésor. Look, Gondi!”

“Look, indeed! That’s very easy to say; but I don’t see with my own eyes. I have only those of faith, and yours. Well, what are they doing now? I wish to Heaven I were not so near-sighted! Tell me, what are they doing?”

Montrésor answered, “The King bends his ear toward the Duc de Bouillon, who is speaking to him; he speaks again! he gesticulates! he does not cease! Oh, he’ll be minister!”

“He will be minister!” said Fontrailles.

“He will be minister!” echoed the Comte du Lude.

“Oh, no doubt of it!” said Montrésor.

“I hope he’ll give me a regiment, and I’ll marry my cousin,” cried Olivier d’Entraigues, with boyish vivacity.

The Abbé de Gondi sneered, and, looking up at the sky, began to sing to a hunting tune:

“Les étourneaux ont le vent bon,
Ton ton, ton ton, ton taine, ton ton—

“I think, gentlemen, you are more short-sighted than I, or else miracles will come to pass in the year of grace 1642; for Monsieur de Bouillon is no nearer

ALFRED DE VIGNY

being Prime-Minister, though the King do embrace him, than I. He has good qualities, but he will not do; his qualities are not various enough. However, I have much respect for his great and singularly foolish town of Sedan, which is a fine shelter in case of need."

Montrésor and the rest were too attentive to every gesture of the Prince to answer him; and they continued:

"See, Monsieur le Grand takes the reins, and is driving."

The Abbé replied with the same air:

"Si vous conduisez ma brouette,
Ne versez pas, beau postillon,
Ton ton, ton ton, ton taine, ton ton."

"Ah, Abbé, your songs will drive me mad!" said Fontrailles. "You've got airs ready for every event in life."

"I will also find you events which shall go to all the airs," answered Gondi.

"Faith, the air of these pleases me!" said Fontrailles, in an under voice. "I shall not be obliged by Monsieur to carry his confounded treaty to Madrid, and I am not sorry for it; it is a somewhat touchy commission. The Pyrenees are not so easily passed as may be supposed; the Cardinal is on the road."

"Ha! Ha!" cried Montrésor.

"Ha! Ha!" said Olivier.

"Well, what is the matter with you? ah, ah!" asked Gondi. "What have you discovered that is so great?"

CINQ-MARS

“Why, the King has again shaken hands with Monsieur. Thank Heaven, gentlemen, we’re rid of the Cardinal! The old boar is hunted down. Who will stick the knife into him? He must be thrown into the sea.”

“That’s too good for him,” said Olivier; “he must be tried.”

“Certainly,” said the Abbé; “and we sha’n’t want for charges against an insolent fellow who has dared to discharge a page, shall we?” Then, curbing his horse, and letting Olivier and Montrésor pass on, he leaned toward M. du Lude, who was talking with two other serious personages, and said:

“In truth, I am tempted to let my *valet-de-chambre* into the secret; never was a conspiracy treated so lightly. Great enterprises require mystery. This would be an admirable one if some trouble were taken with it. ’Tis in itself a finer one than I have ever read of in history. There is stuff enough in it to upset three kingdoms, if necessary, and the blockheads will spoil all. It is really a pity. I should be very sorry. I’ve a taste for affairs of this kind; and in this one in particular I feel a special interest. There is grandeur about it, as can not be denied. Do you not think so, D’Aubijoux, Montmort?”

While he was speaking, several large and heavy carriages, with six and four horses, followed the same path at two hundred paces behind these gentlemen; the curtains were open on the left side through which to see the King. In the first was the Queen; she was alone at the back, clothed in black and veiled.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

On the box was the Maréchale d'Effiat; and at the feet of the Queen was the Princesse Marie. Seated on one side on a stool, her robe and her feet hung out of the carriage, and were supported by a gilt step—for, as we have already observed, there were then no doors to the coaches. She also tried to see through the trees the movements of the King, and often leaned back, annoyed by the passing of the Prince-Palatine and his suite.

This northern Prince was sent by the King of Poland, apparently on a political negotiation, but in reality, to induce the Duchesse de Mantua to espouse the old King Uladislas VI; and he displayed at the court of France all the luxury of his own, then called at Paris “barbarian and Scythian,” and so far justified these names by strange eastern costumes. The Palatine of Posnania was very handsome, and wore, in common with the people of his suite, a long, thick beard. His head, shaved like that of a Turk, was covered with a furred cap. He had a short vest, enriched with diamonds and rubies; his horse was painted red, and amply plumed. He was attended by a company of Polish guards in red and yellow uniforms, wearing large cloaks with long sleeves, which hung negligently from the shoulder. The Polish lords who escorted him were dressed in gold and silver brocade; and behind their shaved heads floated a single lock of hair, which gave them an Asiatic and Tartar aspect, as unknown at the court of Louis XIII as that of the Moscovites. The women thought all this rather savage and alarming.

CINQ-MARS

Marie de Mantua was importuned with the profound salutations and Oriental elegancies of this foreigner and his suite. Whenever he passed before her, he thought himself called upon to address a compliment to her in broken French, awkwardly made up of a few words about hope and royalty. She found no other means to rid herself of him than by repeatedly putting her handkerchief to her nose, and saying aloud to the Queen:

"In truth, Madame, these gentlemen have an odor about them that makes one quite ill."

"It will be desirable to strengthen your nerves and accustom yourself to it," answered Anne of Austria, somewhat dryly.

Then, fearing she had hurt her feelings, she continued gayly:

"You will become used to them, as we have done; and you know that in respect to odors I am rather fastidious. Monsieur Mazarin told me, the other day, that my punishment in purgatory will consist in breathing ill scents and sleeping in Russian cloth."

Yet the Queen was very grave, and soon subsided into silence. Burying herself in her carriage, enveloped in her mantle, and apparently taking no interest in what was passing around her, she yielded to the motion of the carriage. Marie, still occupied with the King, talked in a low voice with the Maréchale d'Effiat; each sought to give the other hopes which neither felt, and sought to deceive each other out of love.

"Madame, I congratulate you; Monsieur le Grand

ALFRED DE VIGNY

is seated with the King. Never has he been so highly distinguished," said Marie.

Then she was silent for a long time, and the carriage rolled mournfully over the dead, dry leaves.

"Yes, I see it with joy; the King is so good!" answered the Maréchale.

And she sighed deeply.

A long and sad silence again followed; each looked at the other and mutually found their eyes full of tears. They dared not speak again; and Marie, drooping her head, saw nothing but the brown, damp earth scattered by the wheels. A melancholy reverie occupied her mind; and although she had before her the spectacle of the first court of Europe at the feet of him she loved, everything inspired her with fear, and dark presentiments involuntarily agitated her.

Suddenly a horse passed by her like the wind; she raised her eyes, and had just time to see the features of Cinq-Mars. He did not look at her; he was pale as a corpse, and his eyes were hidden under his knitted brows and the shadows of his lowered hat. She followed him with trembling eyes; she saw him stop in the midst of the group of cavaliers who preceded the carriages, and who received him with their hats off.

A moment after he went into the wood with one of them, looking at her from the distance, and following her with his eyes until the carriage had passed; then he seemed to give the man a roll of papers, and disappeared. The mist which was falling prevented her from seeing him any more. It was, indeed, one of those fogs so frequent on the banks of the Loire.

CINQ-MARS

The sun looked at first like a small blood-red moon, enveloped in a tattered shroud, and within half an hour was concealed under so thick a cloud that Marie could scarcely distinguish the foremost horses of the carriage, while the men who passed at the distance of a few paces looked like grizzly shadows. This icy vapor turned to a penetrating rain and at the same time a cloud of fetid odor. The Queen made the beautiful Princess sit beside her; and they turned toward Chambord quickly and in silence. They soon heard the horns recalling the scattered hounds; the huntsmen passed rapidly by the carriage, seeking their way through the fog, and calling to each other. Marie saw only now and then the head of a horse, or a dark body half issuing from the gloomy vapor of the woods, and tried in vain to distinguish any words. At length her heart beat; there was a call for M. de Cinq-Mars.

“The King asks for Monsieur le Grand,” was repeated about; “where can Monsieur le Grand Ecuyer be gone to?”

A voice, passing near, said, “He has just lost himself.”

These simple words made her shudder, for her afflicted spirit gave them the most sinister meaning. The terrible thought pursued her to the château and into her apartments, wherein she hastened to shut herself. She soon heard the noise of the entry of the King and of Monsieur, then, in the forest, some shots whose flash was unseen. She in vain looked at the narrow windows; they seemed covered on the outside with a white cloth that shut out the light.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Meanwhile, at the extremity of the forest, toward Montfauult, there had lost themselves two cavaliers, wearied with seeking the way to the château in the monotonous similarity of the trees and paths; they were about to stop near a pond, when eight or nine men, springing from the thickets, rushed upon them, and before they had time to draw, hung to their legs and arms and to the bridles of their horses in such a manner as to hold them fixed. At the same time a hoarse voice cried in the fog:

“Are you Royalists or Cardinalists? Cry, ‘Vive le Grand!’ or you are dead men!”

“Scoundrels,” answered the first cavalier, trying to open the holsters of his pistols, “I will have you hanged for abusing my name.”

“Dios es el Señor!” cried the same voice.

All the men immediately released their hold, and ran into the wood; a burst of savage laughter was heard, and a man approached Cinq-Mars.

“*Amigo*, do you not recognize me? ’Tis but a joke of Jacques, the Spanish captain.”

Fontrailles approached, and said in a low voice to the *grand écuyer*:

“Monsieur, this is an enterprising fellow; I would advise you to employ him. We must neglect no chance.”

“Listen to me,” said Jacques de Laubardemont, “and answer at once. I am not a phrase-maker, like my father. I bear in mind that you have done me some good offices; and lately again, you have been useful to me, as you always are, without knowing it,

CINQ-MARS

for I have somewhat repaired my fortune in your little insurrections. If you will, I can render you an important service; I command a few brave men."

"What service?" asked Cinq-Mars. "We will see."

"I commence by a piece of information. This morning while you descended the King's staircase on one side, Father Joseph ascended the other."

"Ha! this, then, is the secret of his sudden and inexplicable change! Can it be? A king of France! and to allow us to confide all our secrets to him."

"Well! is that all? Do you say nothing? You know I have an old account to settle with the Capuchin."

"What's that to me?" and he hung down his head, absorbed in a profound revery.

"It matters a great deal to you, since you have only to speak the word, and I will rid you of him before thirty-six hours from this time, though he is now very near Paris. We might even add the Cardinal, if you wish."

"Leave me; I will use no poniards," said Cinq-Mars.

"Ah! I understand you," replied Jacques. "You are right; you would prefer our despatching him with the sword. This is just. He is worth it; 'tis a distinction due to him. It were undoubtedly more suitable for great lords to take charge of the Cardinal; and that he who despatches his Eminence should be in a fair way to be a *maréchal*. For myself, I am not proud; one must not be proud, whatever one's merit in one's profession. I must not touch the Cardinal; he's a morsel for a king!"

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"Nor any others," said the *grand écuyer*.

"Oh, let us have the Capuchin!" said Captain Jacques, urgently.

"You are wrong if you refuse this office," said Fontrailles; "such things occur every day. Vitry began with Concini; and he was made a *maréchal*. You see men extremely well at court who have killed their enemies with their own hands in the streets of Paris, and you hesitate to rid yourself of a villain! Richelieu has his agents; you must have yours. I can not understand your scruples."

"Do not torment him," said Jacques, abruptly; "I understand it. I thought as he does when I was a boy, before reason came. I would not have killed even a monk; but let me speak to him." Then, turning toward Cinq-Mars, "Listen: when men conspire, they seek the death or at least the downfall of some one, eh?"

And he paused.

"Now in that case, we are out with God, and in with the Devil, eh?"

"*Secundo*, as they say at the Sorbonne; it's no worse when one is damned, to be so for much than for little, eh?"

"*Ergo*, it is indifferent whether a thousand or one be killed. I defy you to answer that."

"Nothing could be better argued, Doctor-dagger," said Fontrailles, half-laughing, "I see you will be a good travelling-companion. You shall go with me to Spain if you like."

"I know you are going to take the treaty there,"

CINQ-MARS

answered Jacques; "and I will guide you through the Pyrenees by roads unknown to man. But I shall be horribly vexed to go away without having wrung the neck of that old he-goat, whom we leave behind, like a knight in the midst of a game of chess. Once more Monsieur," he continued with an air of pious earnestness, "if you have any religion in you, refuse no longer; recollect the words of our theological fathers, Hurtado de Mendoza and Sanchez, who have proved that a man may secretly kill his enemies, since by this means he avoids two sins—that of exposing his life, and that of fighting a duel. It is in accordance with this grand consolatory principle that I have always acted."

"Go, go!" said Cinq-Mars, in a voice thick with rage; "I have other things to think of."

"Of what more important?" said Fontrailles; "this might be a great weight in the balance of our destinies."

"I am thinking how much the heart of a king weighs in it," said Cinq-Mars.

"You terrify me," replied the gentleman; "we can not go so far as that!"

"Nor do I think what you suppose, Monsieur," continued D'Effiat, in a severe tone. "I was merely reflecting how kings complain when a subject betrays them. Well, war! war! civil war, foreign war, let your fires be kindled! since I hold the match, I will apply it to the mine. Perish the State! perish twenty kingdoms, if necessary! No ordinary calamities suffice when the King betrays the subject. Listen to me."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

And he took Fontrailles a few steps aside.

"I only charged you to prepare our retreat and succors, in case of abandonment on the part of the King. Just now I foresaw this abandonment in his forced manifestation of friendship; and I decided upon your setting out when he finished his conversation by announcing his departure for Perpignan. I feared Narbonne; I now see that he is going there to deliver himself up a prisoner to the Cardinal. Go at once. I add to the letters I have given you the treaty here; it is in fictitious names, but here is the counterpart, signed by Monsieur, by the Duc de Bouillon, and by me. The Count-Duke of Olivarès desires nothing further. There are blanks for the Duc d'Orléans, which you will fill up as you please. Go; in a month I shall expect you at Perpignan. I will have Sedan opened to the seventeen thousand Spaniards from Flanders."

Then, advancing toward the adventurer, who awaited him, he said:

"For you, brave fellow, since you desire to aid me, I charge you with escorting this gentleman to Madrid; you will be largely recompensed."

Jacques, twisting his moustache, replied:

"Ah, you do not then scorn to employ me! you exhibit your judgment and taste. Do you know that the great Queen Christina of Sweden has asked for me, and wished to have me with her as her confidential man. She was brought up to the sound of the cannon by the 'Lion of the North,' Gustavus Adolphus, her father. She loves the smell of powder and brave

CINQ-MARS

men; but I would not serve her, because she is a Huguenot, and I have fixed principles, from which I never swerve. *Par exemple*, I swear to you by Saint Jacques to guide Monsieur through the passes of the Pyrenees to Oleron as surely as through these woods, and to defend him against the Devil, if need be, as well as your papers, which we will bring you back without blot or tear. As for recompense, I want none. I always find it in the action itself. Besides, I do not receive money, for I am a gentleman. The Laubardemonts are a very ancient and very good family.”

“Adieu, then, noble Monsieur,” said Cinq-Mars; “go!”

After having pressed the hand of Fontrailles, he sighed and disappeared in the wood, on his return to the château of Chambord.

CHAPTER XX

THE READING

Les circonstances dévoilent pour ainsi dire la royauté du génie, dernière ressource des peuples éteints. Les grands écrivains . . . ces rois qui n'en ont pas le nom, mais qui règnent véritablement par la force du caractère et la grandeur des pensées, sont élus par les événements auxquels ils doivent commander. Sans ancêtres et sans postérité, seuls de leur race, leur mission remplie, ils disparaissent en laissant à l'avenir des ordres qu'il exécutera fidèlement.—F. DE LAMENNAIS.



SHORTLY after the events just narrated, at the corner of the Palais-Royal, at a small and pretty house, numerous carriages were seen to draw up, and a door, reached by three steps, frequently to open. The neighbors often came to their windows to complain of the noise made at so late an hour of the night, despite the fear of robbers; and the patrol often stopped in surprise, and passed on only when they saw at each carriage ten or twelve footmen, armed with staves and carrying torches. A young gentleman, followed by three lackeys, entered and asked for Mademoiselle de Lorme. He wore a long rapier, ornamented with pink ribbon. Enormous bows of the same color on his high-heeled shoes almost entirely concealed his feet, which after the fashion of the day

CINQ-MARS

he turned very much out. He frequently twisted a small curling moustache, and before entering combed his small pointed beard. There was but one exclamation when he was announced.

"Here he is at last!" cried a young and rich voice. "He has made us wait long enough for him, the dear Desbarreaux. Come, take a seat! place yourself at this table and read."

The speaker was a woman of about four-and-twenty, tall and handsome, notwithstanding her somewhat woolly black hair and her dark olive complexion. There was something masculine in her manner, which she seemed to derive from her circle, composed entirely of men. She took their arm unceremoniously, as she spoke to them, with a freedom which she communicated to them. Her conversation was animated rather than joyous. It often excited laughter around her; but it was by dint of intellect that she created gayety (if we may so express it), for her countenance, impassioned as it was, seemed incapable of bending into a smile, and her large blue eyes, under her jet-black hair, gave her at first rather a strange appearance.

Desbarreaux kissed her hand with a gallant and chivalrous air. He then, talking to her all the time, walked round the large room, where were assembled nearly thirty persons—some seated in the large arm-chairs, others standing in the vast chimney-place, others conversing in the embrasures of the windows under the heavy curtains. Some of them were obscure men, now illustrious; others illustrious men, now obscure for posterity. Thus, among the latter, he pro-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

foundly saluted MM. d'Aubijoux, de Brion, de Montmort, and other very brilliant gentlemen, who were there as judges; tenderly, and with an air of esteem, pressed the hands of MM. Monteruel, de Sirmond, de Malleville, Baro, Gombauld, and other learned men, almost all called great men in the annals of the Academy of which they were the founders—itself called sometimes the Académie des Beaux Esprits, but really the Académie Française. But M. Desbarreaux gave but a mere patronizing nod to young Corneille, who was talking in a corner with a foreigner, and with a young man whom he presented to the mistress of the house by the name of M. Poquelin, son of the *valet-de-chambre tapis-sier du roi*. The foreigner was Milton; the young man was Molière.

Before the reading expected from the young Sybarite, a great contest arose between him and other poets and prose writers of the time. They spoke to each other with great volubility and animation a language incomprehensible to any one who should suddenly have come among them without being initiated, eagerly pressing each other's hands with affectionate compliments and infinite allusions to their works.

"Ah, here you are, illustrious Baro!" cried the newcomer. "I have read your last sixain. Ah, what a sixain! how full of the gallant and the *tendre*!"

"What is that you say of the *tendre*?" interrupted Marion de Lorme; "have you ever seen that country? You stopped at the village of Grand-Esprit, and at that of Jolis-Vers, but you have been no farther. If Monsieur le Gouverneur de Notre Dame de la Garde will

CINQ-MARS

please to show us his new chart, I will tell you where you are."

Scudéry arose with a vainglorious and pedantic air; and, unrolling upon the table a sort of geographical chart tied with blue ribbons, he himself showed the lines of red ink which he had traced upon it.

"This is the finest piece of *Clélie*," he said. "This chart is generally found very gallant; but 'tis merely a slight ebullition of playful wit, to please our little literary *cabale*. However, as there are strange people in the world, it is possible that all who see it may not have minds sufficiently well turned to understand it. This is the road which must be followed to go from Nouvelle-Amitié to Tendre; and observe, gentlemen, that as we say Cumæ-on-the-Ionian-Sea, Cumæ-on-the-Tyrrhean-Sea, we shall say Tendre-sur-Inclination, Tendre-sur-Estime, and Tendre-sur-Reconnaissance. We must begin by inhabiting the village of Grand-Cœur, Générosité, Exactitude, and Petits-Soins."

"Ah! how very pretty!" interposed Desbarreaux. "See the villages marked out; here is Petits-Soins, Billet-Galant, then Billet-Doux!"

"Oh! 'tis ingenious in the highest degree!" cried Vaugelas, Colletet, and the rest.

"And observe," continued the author, inflated with this success, "that it is necessary to pass through Complaisance and Sensibilité; and that if we do not take this road, we run the risk of losing our way to Tiédeur, Oubli, and of falling into the lake of Indifférence."

"Delicious! delicious! gallant *au suprême*!" cried the auditors; "never was greater genius!"

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Well, Madame,” resumed Scudéry, “I now declare it in your house: this work, printed under my name, is by my sister—she who translated ‘Sappho’ so agreeably.” And without being asked, he recited in a declamatory tone verses ending thus:

L’Amour est un mal agréable
Dont mon cœur ne saurait guérir;
Mais quand il serait guérissable,
Il est bien plus doux d’en mourir.

“How! had that Greek so much wit? I can not believe it,” exclaimed Marion de Lorme; “how superior Mademoiselle de Scudéry is to her! That idea is wholly hers; she must unquestionably put these charming verses into *Clélie*. They will figure well in that Roman history.”

“Admirable, perfect!” cried all the *savans*; “Horatius, Aruns, and the amiable Porsenna are such gallant lovers.”

They were all bending over the “carte de Tendre,” and their fingers crossed in following the windings of the amorous rivers. The young Poquelin ventured to raise a timid voice and his melancholy but acute glance, and said—

“What purpose does this serve? Is it to give happiness or pleasure? Monsieur seems to me not singularly happy, and I do not feel very gay.”

The only reply he got was a general look of contempt; he consoled himself by meditating, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.

Desbarreaux prepared to read a pious sonnet, which

CINQ-MARS

he was penitent for having composed in an illness; he seemed to be ashamed of having thought for a moment upon God at the sight of his lightning, and blushed at the weakness. The mistress of the house stopped him.

“It is not yet time to read your beautiful verses; you would be interrupted. We expect Monsieur le Grand Ecuyer and other gentlemen; it would be actual murder to allow a great mind to speak during this noise and confusion. But here is a young Englishman who has just come from Italy, and is on his return to London. They tell me he has composed a poem—I don’t know what; but he’ll repeat some verses of it. Many of you gentlemen of the Academy know English; and for the rest he has had the passages he is going to read translated by an ex-secretary of the Duke of Buckingham, and here are copies in French on this table.”

So saying, she took them and distributed them among her erudite visitors. The company seated themselves, and were silent. It took some time to persuade the young foreigner to speak or to quit the recess of the window, where he seemed to have come to a very good understanding with Corneille. He at last advanced to an armchair placed near the table; he seemed of feeble health, and fell into, rather than seated himself in, the chair. He rested his elbow on the table, and with his hand covered his large and beautiful eyes, which were half closed, and reddened with night-watches or tears. He repeated his fragments from memory. His doubting auditors looked at him haughtily, or at least patronizingly; others carelessly glanced over the translation of his verses.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

His voice, at first suppressed, grew clearer by the very flow of his harmonious recital; the breath of poetic inspiration soon elevated him to himself; and his look, raised to heaven, became sublime as that of the young evangelist, conceived by Raffaello, for the light still shone on it. He narrated in his verses the first disobedience of man, and invoked the Holy Spirit, who prefers before all other temples a pure and simple heart, who knows all, and who was present at the birth of time.

This opening was received with a profound silence; and a slight murmur arose after the enunciation of the last idea. He heard not; he saw only through a cloud; he was in the world of his own creation. He continued.

He spoke of the infernal spirit, bound in avenging fire by adamantine chains, lying vanquished nine times the space that measures night and day to mortal men; of the darkness visible of the eternal prisons and the burning ocean where the fallen angels float. Then, his voice, now powerful, began the address of the fallen angel. "Art thou," he said, "he who in the happy realms of light, clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine myriads? From what height fallen? What though the field be lost, all is not lost! Unconquerable will and study of revenge, immortal hate and courage never to submit nor yield—what is else not to be overcome."

Here a lackey in a loud voice announced MM. de Montrésor and d'Entraigues. They saluted, exchanged a few words, deranged the chairs, and then settled down. The auditors availed themselves of the inter-

CINQ-MARS

ruption to institute a dozen private conversations; scarcely anything was heard but expressions of censure, and imputations of bad taste. Even some men of merit, dulled by a particular habit of thinking, cried out that they did not understand it; that it was above their comprehension (not thinking how truly they spoke); and from this feigned humility gained themselves a compliment, and for the poet an impertinent remark—a double advantage. Some voices even pronounced the word “profanation.”

The poet, interrupted, put his head between his hands and his elbows on the table, that he might not hear the noise either of praise or censure. Three men only approached him, an officer, Poquelin, and Corneille; the latter whispered to Milton:

“I would advise you to change the picture; your hearers are not on a level with this.”

The officer pressed the hand of the English poet and said to him:

“I admire you with all my soul.”

The astonished Englishman looked at him, and saw an intellectual, impassioned, and sickly countenance.

He bowed, and collected himself, in order to proceed. His voice took a gentle tone and a soft accent; he spoke of the chaste happiness of the two first of human beings. He described their majestic nakedness, the ingenuous command of their looks, their walk among lions and tigers, which gambolled at their feet; he spoke of the purity of their morning prayer, of their enchanting smile, the playful tenderness of their youth, and their

ALFRED DE VIGNY

enamored conversation, so painful to the Prince of Darkness.

Gentle tears quite involuntarily made humid the eyes of the beautiful Marion de Lorme. Nature had taken possession of her heart, despite her head; poetry filled it with grave and religious thoughts, from which the intoxication of pleasure had ever diverted her. The idea of virtuous love appeared to her for the first time in all its beauty; and she seemed as if struck with a magic wand, and changed into a pale and beautiful statue.

Corneille, his young friend, and the officer, were full of a silent admiration which they dared not express, for raised voices drowned that of the surprised poet.

"I can't stand this!" cried Desbarreaux. "It is of an insipidity to make one sick."

"And what absence of grace, gallantry, and the *belle flamme!*" said Scudéry, coldly.

"Ah, how different from our immortal D'Urfé!" said Baro, the continuator.

"Where is the 'Ariane,' where the 'Astrea?'" cried, with a groan, Godeau, the annotator.

The whole assembly well-nigh made these obliging remarks, though uttered so as only to be heard by the poet as a murmur of uncertain import. He understood, however, that he produced no enthusiasm, and collected himself to touch another chord of his lyre.

At this moment the Counsellor de Thou was announced, who, modestly saluting the company, glided silently behind the author near Corneille, Poquelin, and the young officer. Milton resumed his strain.

He recounted the arrival of a celestial guest in the

CINQ-MARS

garden of Eden, like a second Aurora in mid-day, shaking the plumes of his divine wings, that filled the air with heavenly fragrance, who recounted to man the history of heaven, the revolt of Lucifer, clothed in an armor of diamonds, raised on a car brilliant as the sun, guarded by glittering cherubim, and marching against the Eternal. But Emmanuel appears on the living chariot of the Lord; and his two thousand thunderbolts hurled down to hell, with awful noise, the accursed army confounded.

At this the company arose; and all was interrupted, for religious scruples became leagued with false taste. Nothing was heard but exclamations which obliged the mistress of the house to rise also, and endeavor to conceal them from the author. This was not difficult, for he was entirely absorbed in the elevation of his thoughts. His genius at this moment had nothing in common with the earth; and when he once more opened his eyes on those who surrounded him, he saw near him four admirers, whose voices were better heard than those of the assembly.

Corneille said to him:

“Listen. If you aim at present glory, do not expect it from so fine a work. Pure poetry is appreciated by but few souls. For the common run of men, it must be closely allied with the almost physical interest of the drama. I had been tempted to make a poem of ‘Polyeuctes’; but I shall cut down this subject, abridge it of the heavens, and it shall be only a tragedy.”

“What matters to me the glory of the moment?” answered Milton. “I think not of success. I sing because

ALFRED DE VIGNY

I feel myself a poet. I go whither inspiration leads me. Its path is ever the right one. If these verses were not to be read till a century after my death, I should write them just the same."

"I admire them before they are written," said the young officer. "I see in them the God whose innate image I have found in my heart."

"Who is it speaks thus kindly to me?" asked the poet.

"I am René Descartes," replied the soldier, gently.

"How, sir!" cried De Thou. "Are you so happy as to be related to the author of the *Princeps*?"

"I am the author of that work," replied René.

"You, sir!—but—still—pardon me—but—are you not a military man?" stammered out the counsellor, in amazement.

"Well, what has the habit of the body to do with the thought? Yes, I wear the sword. I was at the siege of Rochelle. I love the profession of arms because it keeps the soul in a region of noble ideas by the continual feeling of the sacrifice of life; yet it does not occupy the whole man. He can not always apply his thoughts to it. Peace lulls them. Moreover, one has also to fear seeing them suddenly interrupted by an obscure blow or an absurd and untimely accident. And if a man be killed in the execution of his plan, posterity preserves an idea of the plan which he himself had not, and which may be wholly preposterous; and this is the evil side of the profession for a man of letters."

De Thou smiled with pleasure at the simple language of this superior man—this man whom he so admired,

CINQ-MARS

and in his admiration loved. He pressed the hand of the young sage of Touraine, and drew him into an adjoining cabinet with Corneille, Milton, and Molière, and with them enjoyed one of those conversations which make us regard as lost the time which precedes them and the time which is to follow them.

For two hours they had enchanted one another with their discourse, when the sound of music, of guitars and flutes playing minuets, sarabands, allemandes, and the Spanish dances which the young Queen had brought into fashion, the continual passing of groups of young ladies and their joyous laughter, all announced that the ball had commenced. A very young and beautiful person, holding a large fan as it were a sceptre, and surrounded by ten young men, entered their retired chamber with her brilliant court, which she ruled like a queen, and entirely put to the rout the studious conversers.

“Adieu, gentlemen!” said De Thou. “I make way for Mademoiselle de l’Enclos and her musketeers.”

“Really, gentlemen,” said the youthful Ninon, “we seem to frighten you. Have I disturbed you? You have all the air of conspirators.”

“We are perhaps more so than these gentlemen, although we dance,” said Olivier d’Entraigues, who led her.

“Ah! your conspiracy is against me, Monsieur le Page!” said Ninon, looking the while at another light-horseman, and abandoning her remaining arm to a third, the other gallants seeking to place themselves in the way of her flying *æillades*, for she distributed her

ALFRED DE VIGNY

glances brilliant as the rays of the sun dancing over the moving waters.

De Thou stole away without any one thinking of stopping him, and was descending the great staircase, when he met the little Abbé de Gondi, red, hot, and out of breath, who stopped him with an animated and joyous air.

"How now! whither go you? Let the foreigners and *savans* go. You are one of us. I am somewhat late; but our beautiful Aspasia will pardon me. Why are you going? Is it all over?"

"Why, it seems so. When the dancing begins, the reading is done."

"The reading, yes; but the oaths?" said the Abbé, in a low voice.

"What oaths?" asked De Thou.

"Is not Monsieur le Grand come?"

"I expected to see him; but I suppose he has not come, or else he has gone."

"No, no! come with me," said the hare-brained Abbé. "You are one of us. *Parbleu!* it is impossible to do without you; come!"

De Thou, unwilling to refuse, and thus appear to disown his friends, even for parties of pleasure which annoyed him, followed De Gondi, who passed through two cabinets, and descended a small private staircase. At each step he took, he heard more distinctly the voices of an assemblage of men. Gondi opened the door. An unexpected spectacle met his view.

The chamber he was entering, lighted by a mysterious glimmer, seemed the asylum of the most voluptu-

CINQ-MARS

ous rendezvous. On one side was a gilt bed, with a canopy of tapestry ornamented with feathers, and covered with lace and ornaments. The furniture, shining with gold, was of grayish silk, richly embroidered. Velvet cushions were at the foot of each armchair, upon a thick carpet. Small mirrors, connected with one another by ornaments of silver, seemed an entire glass, itself a perfection then unknown, and everywhere multiplied their glittering faces. No sound from without could penetrate this throne of delight; but the persons assembled there seemed far remote from the thoughts which it was calculated to give rise to. A number of men, whom he recognized as courtiers, or soldiers of rank, crowded the entrance of this chamber and an adjoining apartment of larger dimensions. All were intent upon that which was passing in the centre of the first room. Here, ten young men, standing, and holding in their hands their drawn swords, the points of which were lowered toward the ground, were ranged round a table. Their faces, turned to Cinq-Mars, announced that they had just taken an oath to him. The *grand écuyer* stood by himself before the fireplace, his arms folded with an air of all-absorbing reflection. Standing near him, Marion de Lorme, grave and collected, seemed to have presented these gentlemen to him.

When Cinq-Mars perceived his friend, he rushed toward the door, casting a terrible glance at Gondi, and seizing De Thou by both arms, stopped him on the last step.

“What do you here?” he said, in a stifled voice.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Who brought you here? What would you with me? You are lost if you enter.”

“What do you yourself here? What do I see in this house?”

“The consequences of that you wot of. Go; this air is poisoned for all who are here.”

“It is too late; they have seen me. What would they say if I were to withdraw? I should discourage them; you would be lost.”

This dialogue had passed in low and hurried tones; at the last word, De Thou, pushing aside his friend, entered, and with a firm step crossed the apartment to the fireplace.

Cinq-Mars, trembling with rage, resumed his place, hung his head, collected himself, and soon raising a more calm countenance, continued a discourse which the entrance of his friend had interrupted——

“Be then with us, gentlemen; there is no longer any need for so much mystery. Remember that when a strong mind embraces an idea, it must follow it to all its consequences. Your courage will have a wider field than that of a court intrigue. Thank me; instead of a conspiracy, I give you a war. Monsieur de Bouillon has departed to place himself at the head of his army of Italy; in two days, and before the king, I quit Paris for Perpignan. Come all of you thither; the Royalists of the army await us.”

Here he threw around him calm and confident looks; he saw gleams of joy and enthusiasm in the eyes of all who surrounded him. Before allowing his own heart to be possessed by the contagious emotion which precedes

CINQ-MARS

great enterprises, he desired still more firmly to assure himself of them, and said with a grave air :

“Yes, war, gentlemen; think of it, open war. Rochelle and Navarre are arousing their Protestants; the army of Italy will enter on one side; the king’s brother will join us on the other. The man we combat will be surrounded, vanquished, crushed. The parliaments will march in our rear, bearing their petitions to the King, a weapon as powerful as our swords; and after the victory we will throw ourselves at the feet of Louis XIII, our master, that he may pardon us for having delivered him from a cruel and ambitious man, and hastened his own resolution.”

Here, again glancing around him, he saw increasing confidence in the looks and attitudes of his accomplices.

“How!” he continued, crossing his arms, and yet restraining with an effort his own emotion; “you do not recoil before this resolution, which would appear a revolt to any other men! Do you not think that I have abused the powers you have vested in me? I have carried matters very far; but there are times when kings would be served, as it were in spite of themselves. All is arranged, as you know. Sedan will open its gates to us; and we are sure of Spain. Twelve thousand veteran troops will enter Paris with us. No place, however, will be given up to the foreigner; they will all have a French garrison, and be taken in the name of the King.”

“Long live the King! long live the Union! the new Union, the Holy League!” cried the assembly.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“It has come, then!” cried Cinq-Mars, with enthusiasm; “it has come—the most glorious day of my life. Oh, youth, youth, from century to century called frivolous and improvident! of what will men now accuse thee, when they behold conceived, ripened, and ready for execution, under a chief of twenty-two, the most vast, the most just, the most beneficial of enterprises? My friends, what is a great life but a thought of youth executed by mature age? Youth looks fixedly into the future with its eagle glance, traces there a broad plan, lays the foundation stone; and all that our entire existence afterward can do is to approximate to that first design. Oh, when can great projects arise, if not when the heart beats vigorously in the breast? The mind is not sufficient; it is but an instrument.”

A fresh outburst of joy had followed these words, when an old man with a white beard stood forward from the throng.

“Bah!” said Gondi, in a low voice, “here’s the old Chevalier de Guise going to dote, and damp us.”

And truly enough, the old man, pressing the hand of Cinq-Mars, said slowly and with difficulty, having placed himself near him:

“Yes, my son, and you, my children, I see with joy that my old friend Bassompierre is about to be delivered by you, and that you are about to avenge the Comte de Soissons and the young Montmorency. But it is expedient for youth, all ardent as it is, to listen to those who have seen much. I have witnessed the League, my children, and I tell you that you can not now, as then, take the title of the Holy League, the

CINQ-MARS

Holy Union, the Protectors of Saint Peter, or Pillars of the Church, because I see that you reckon on the support of the Huguenots; nor can you put upon your great seal of green wax an empty throne, since it is occupied by a king."

"You may say by two," interrupted Gondi, laughing.

"It is, however, of great importance," continued old Guise, amid the tumultuous young men, "to take a name to which the people may attach themselves; that of War for the Public Welfare has been made use of; Princes of Peace only lately. It is necessary to find one."

"Well, the War of the King," said Cinq-Mars.

"Ay, the War of the King!" cried Gondi and all the young men.

"Moreover," continued the old seigneur, "it is essential to gain the approval of the theological faculty of the Sorbonne, which heretofore sanctioned even the *haut-gourdi*ers and the *sorgueurs*,* and to put in force its second proposition—that it is permitted to the people to disobey the magistrates, and to hang them."

"Eh, Chevalier!" exclaimed Gondi; "this is not the question. Let Monsieur le Grand speak; we are thinking no more of the Sorbonne at present than of your Saint Jacques Clement."

There was a laugh, and Cinq-Mars went on:

"I wished, gentlemen, to conceal nothing from you as to the projects of Monsieur, those of the Duke de Bouillon, or my own, for it is just that a man who stakes his life should know at what game; but I have placed

* Names of the leaguers.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

before you the least fortunate chances, and I have not detailed our strength, for there is not one of you but knows the secret of it. Is it to you, Messieurs de Mont-résor and de Saint-Thibal, I need tell the treasures that Monsieur places at our disposal? Is it to you, Monsieur d'Aignou, Monsieur de Mouy, that I need tell how many gentlemen are eager to join your companies of men-at-arms and light-horse, to fight the Cardinalists; how many in Touraine and in Auvergne, where lay the lands of the House of D'Effiat, and whence will march two thousand seigneurs, with their vassals?

“Baron de Beauvau, shall I recall the zeal and valor of the cuirassiers whom you brought to the unhappy Comte de Soissons, whose cause was ours, and whom you saw assassinated in the midst of his triumph by him whom with you he had defeated? Shall I tell these gentlemen of the joy of the Count-Duke of Olivarès at the news of our intentions, and the letters of the Cardinal-Infanta to the Duke de Bouillon? Shall I speak of Paris to the Abbé de Gondi, to D'Entraigues, and to you, gentlemen, who are daily witnesses of her misery, of her indignation, and her desire to break forth? While all foreign nations demand peace, which the Cardinal de Richelieu still destroys by his want of faith (as he has done in violating the treaty of Ratisbon), all orders of the State groan under his violence, and dread that colossal ambition which aspires to no less than the temporal and even spiritual throne of France.”

A murmur of approbation interrupted Cinq-Mars. There was then silence for a moment; and they heard

CINQ-MARS

the sound of wind instruments, and the measured tread of the dancers.

This noise caused a momentary diversion and a smile in the younger portion of the assembly.

Cinq-Mars profited by this; and raising his eyes, "Pleasures of youth," he cried—"love, music, joyous dances—why do you not alone occupy our leisure hours? Why are not you our sole ambition? What resentment may we not justly feel that we have to make our cries of indignation heard above our bursts of joy, our formidable secrets in the asylum of love, and our oaths of war and death amid the intoxication of *fêtes* and of life!

"Curses on him who saddens the youth of a people! When wrinkles furrow the brow of the young men, we may confidently say that the finger of a tyrant has hollowed them out. The other troubles of youth give it despair and not consternation. Watch those sad and mournful students pass day after day with pale foreheads, slow steps, and half-suppressed voices. One would think they fear to live or to advance a step toward the future. What is there then in France? A man too many.

"Yes," he continued; "for two years I have watched the insidious and profound progress of his ambition. His strange practices, his secret commissions, his judicial assassinations are known to you. Princes, peers, *maréchals*—all have been crushed by him. There is not a family in France but can show some sad trace of his passage. If he regards us all as enemies to his authority, it is because he would have in France none but

ALFRED DE VIGNY

his own house, which twenty years ago held only one of the smallest fiefs of Poitou.

“The humiliated parliament has no longer any voice. The presidents of Nismes, Novion, and Bellèvre have revealed to you their courageous but fruitless resistance to the condemnation to death of the Duke de la Vallette.

“The presidents and councils of sovereign courts have been imprisoned, banished, suspended—a thing before unheard of—because they have raised their voices for the king or for the public.

“The highest offices of justice, who fill them? Infamous and corrupt men, who suck the blood and gold of the country. Paris and the maritime towns taxed; the rural districts ruined and laid waste by the soldiers and other agents of the Cardinal; the peasants reduced to feed on animals killed by the plague or famine, or saving themselves by self-banishment—such is the work of this new justice. His worthy agents have even coined money with the effigy of the Cardinal-Duke. Here are some of his royal pieces.”

The *grand écuyer* threw upon the table a score of gold doubloons whereon Richelieu was represented. A fresh murmur of hatred toward the Cardinal arose in the apartment.

“And think you the clergy are less trampled on and less discontented? No. Bishops have been tried against the laws of the State and in contempt of the respect due to their sacred persons. We have seen, in consequence, Algerine corsairs commanded by an archbishop. Men of the lowest condition have been ele-

CINQ-MARS

vated to the cardinalate. The minister himself, devouring the most sacred things, has had himself elected general of the orders of Citeaux, Cluny, and Premontr , throwing into prison the monks who refused him their votes. Jesuits, Carmelites, Cordeliers, Augustins, Dominicans, have been forced to elect general vicars in France, in order no longer to communicate at Rome with their true superiors, because he would be patriarch in France, and head of the Gallican Church.”

“He’s a schismatic! a monster!” cried several voices.

“His progress, then, is apparent, gentlemen. He is ready to seize both temporal and spiritual power. He has little by little fortified himself against the King in the strongest towns of France—seized the mouths of the principal rivers, the best ports of the ocean, the salt-pits, and all the securities of the kingdom. It is the King, then, whom we must deliver from this oppression. ‘*Le roi et la paix!*’ shall be our cry. The rest must be left to Providence.”

Cinq-Mars greatly astonished the assembly, and De Thou himself, by this address. No one had ever before heard him speak so long together, not even in fireside conversation; and he had never by a single word shown the least aptitude for understanding public affairs. He had, on the contrary, affected the greatest indifference on the subject, even in the eyes of those whom he was molding to his projects, merely manifesting a virtuous indignation at the violence of the minister, but affecting not to put forward any of his own ideas, in order not to suggest personal ambition as the aim of his labors. The confidence given to him rested on his favor with

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the king and his personal bravery. The surprise of all present was therefore such as to cause a momentary silence. It was soon broken by all the transports of Frenchmen, young or old, when fighting of whatever kind is held out to them.

Among those who came forward to press the hand of the young party leader, the Abbé de Gondi jumped about like a kid.

"I have already enrolled my regiment!" he cried. "I have some superb fellows!" Then, addressing Marion de Lorme, "*Parbleu!* Mademoiselle, I will wear your colors—your gray ribbon, and your order of the Allumette. The device is charming——

‘*Nous ne brûlons que pour brûler les autres.*’

And I wish you could see all the fine things we shall do if we are fortunate enough to come to blows."

The fair Marion, who did not like him, began to talk over his head to M. de Thou—a mortification which always exasperated the little Abbé, who abruptly left her, walking as tall as he could, and scornfully twisting his moustache.

All at once a sudden silence took possession of the assembly. A rolled paper had struck the ceiling and fallen at the feet of Cinq-Mars. He picked it up and unrolled it, after having looked eagerly around him. He sought in vain to divine whence it came; all those who advanced had only astonishment and intense curiosity depicted in their faces.

"Here is my name wrongly written," he said coldly.

CINQ-MARS

“A CINQ MARCS,

CENTURIE DE NOSTRADAMUS.*

Quand *bonnet rouge* passera par la fenêtre,
A *quarante onces* on coupera tête,
Et *tout* finira.

“There is a traitor among us, gentlemen,” he said, throwing away the paper. “But no matter. We are not men to be frightened by his sanguinary jests.”

“We must find the traitor out, and throw him through the window,” said the young men.

Still, a disagreeable sensation had come over the assembly. They now only spoke in whispers, and each regarded his neighbor with distrust. Some withdrew; the meeting grew thinner. Marion de Lorme repeated to every one that she would dismiss her servants, who alone could be suspected. Despite her efforts a coldness reigned throughout the apartment. The first sentences of Cinq-Mars’ address, too, had left some uncertainty as to the intentions of the King; and this untimely candor had somewhat shaken a few of the less determined conspirators.

Gondi pointed this out to Cinq-Mars.

“Hark ye!” he said in a low voice. “Believe me, I have carefully studied conspiracies and assemblages; there are certain purely mechanical means which it is necessary to adopt. Follow my advice here; I know a good deal of this sort of thing. They want something more. Give them a little contradiction; that always

* This punning prediction was made public three months before the conspiracy.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

succeeds in France. You will quite make them alive again. Seem not to wish to retain them against their will, and they will remain."

The *grand écuyer* approved of the suggestion, and advancing toward those whom he knew to be most deeply compromised, said:

"For the rest, gentlemen, I do not wish to force any one to follow me. Plenty of brave men await us at Perpignan, and all France is with us. If any one desires to secure himself a retreat, let him speak. We will give him the means of placing himself in safety at once."

Not one would hear of this proposition; and the movement it occasioned produced a renewal of the oaths of hatred against the minister.

Cinq-Mars, however, proceeded to put the question individually to some of the persons present, in the election of whom he showed much judgment; for he ended with Montrésor, who cried that he would pass his sword through his body if he had for a moment entertained such an idea, and with Gondi, who, rising fiercely on his heels, exclaimed:

"Monsieur le Grand Ecuyer, my retreat is the archbishopric of Paris and L'Ile Notre-Dame. I'll make it a place strong enough to keep me from being taken."

"And yours?" he said to De Thou.

"At your side," murmured De Thou, lowering his eyes, unwilling to give importance to his resolution by the directness of his look.

"You will have it so? Well, I accept," said Cinq-Mars; "and my sacrifice herein, dear friend, is greater than yours." Then turning toward the assembly:

CINQ-MARS

“Gentlemen, I see in you the last men of France, for after the Montmorencys and the Soissons, you alone dare lift a head free and worthy of our old liberty. If Richelieu triumph, the ancient bases of the monarchy will crumble with us. The court will reign alone, in the place of the parliaments, the old barriers, and at the same time the powerful supports of the royal authority. Let us be conquerors, and France will owe to us the preservation of her ancient manners and her time-honored guarantees. And now, gentlemen, it were a pity to spoil the ball on this account. You hear the music. The ladies await you. Let us go and dance.”

“The Cardinal shall pay the fiddlers,” added Gondi.

The young men applauded with a laugh; and all re-ascended to the ballroom as lightly as they would have gone to the battlefield.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CONFSSIONAL

“C’est pour vous, beauté fatale, que je viens dans ce lieu terrible!”—*The Monk*, LEWIS.



T was on the day following the assembly that had taken place in the house of Marion de Lorme. A thick snow covered the roofs of Paris and settled in its large gutters and streets, where it arose in gray heaps, furrowed by the wheels of carriages.

It was eight o'clock, and the night was dark. The tumult of the city was silent on account of the thick carpet the winter had spread for it, and which deadened the sound of the wheels over the stones, and of the feet of men and horses. In a narrow street that winds round the old church of St. Eustache, a man, enveloped in his cloak, slowly walked up and down, constantly watching for the appearance of some one. He often seated himself upon one of the posts of the church, sheltering himself from the falling snow under one of the statues of saints which jutted out from the roof of the building, stretching over the narrow path like birds of prey, which, about to make a stoop, have folded their wings. Often, too, the old man, opening his cloak, beat his arms against

CINQ-MARS

his breast to warm himself, or blew upon his fingers, ill protected from the cold by a pair of buff gloves reaching nearly to the elbow. At last he saw a slight shadow gliding along the wall.

"Ah, Santa Maria! what villainous countries are these of the North!" said a woman's voice, trembling. "Ah, the duchy of Mantua! would I were back there again, Grandchamp!"

"Pshaw! don't speak so loud," said the old domestic, abruptly. "The walls of Paris have Cardinalist ears, and more especially the walls of the churches. Has your mistress entered? My master awaits her at the door."

"Yes, yes; she has gone in."

"Be silent," said Grandchamp. "The sound of the clock is cracked. That's a bad sign."

"That clock has sounded the hour of a rendezvous."

"For me, it sounds like a passing-bell. But be silent, Laure; here are three cloaks passing."

They allowed three men to pass. Grandchamp followed them, made sure of the road they took, and returned to his seat, sighing deeply.

"The snow is cold, Laure, and I am old. Monsieur le Grand might have chosen another of his men to keep watch for him while he's making love. It's all very well for you to carry love-letters and ribbons and portraits and such trash, but for me, I ought to be treated with more consideration. Monsieur le Maréchal would not have done so. Old domestics give respectability to a house, and should be themselves respected."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Has your master arrived long, *caro amico*?”

“Eh, *cara, caro*! leave me in peace. We had both been freezing for an hour when you came. I should have had time to smoke three Turkish pipes. Attend to your business, and go and look to the other doors of the church, and see that no suspicious person is prowling about. Since there are but two vedettes, they must beat about well.”

“Ah, what a thing it is to have no one to whom to say a friendly word when it is so cold! and my poor mistress! to come on foot all the way from the Hôtel de Nevers. Ah, *amore! qui regna amore!*”

“Come, Italian, wheel about, I tell thee. Let me hear no more of thy musical tongue.”

“Ah, Santa Maria! What a harsh voice, dear Grandchamp! You were much more amiable at Chaumont, in Turena, when you talked to me of *miei occhi neri*.”

“Hold thy tongue, prattler! Once more, thy Italian is only good for buffoons and rope-dancers, or to accompany the learned dogs.”

“Ah, *Italia mia*! Grandchamp, listen to me, and you shall hear the language of the gods. If you were a gallant man, like him who wrote this for a Laure like me!”

And she began to hum:

Lieti fiori e felici, e ben nate erbe
Che Madonna pensando premer sole;
Piaggia ch'ascolti su dolci parole
E del bel piede alcun vestigio serbe.

CINQ-MARS

The old soldier was but little used to the voice of a young girl; and in general when a woman spoke to him, the tone he assumed in answering always fluctuated between an awkward compliment and an ebullition of temper. But on this occasion he appeared moved by the Italian song, and twisted his moustache, which was always with him a sign of embarrassment and distress. He even omitted a rough sound something like a laugh, and said:

“Pretty enough, *mordieu!* that recalls to my mind the siege of Casal; but be silent, little one. I have not yet heard the Abbé Quillet come. This troubles me. He ought to have been here before our two young people; and for some time past——”

Laure, who was afraid of being sent alone to the Place St. Eustache, answered that she was quite sure he had gone in, and continued:

“Ombrose selve, ove percote il sole
Che vi fa co’ suoi raggi alte e superbe.”

“Hum!” said the worthy old soldier, grumbling. “I have my feet in the snow, and a gutter runs down on my head, and there’s death at my heart; and you sing to me of violets, of the sun, and of grass, and of love. Be silent!”

And, retiring farther in the recess of the church, he leaned his gray head upon his hands, pensive and motionless. Laure dared not again speak to him.

While her waiting-woman had gone to find Grandchamp, the young and trembling Marie with a timid hand had pushed open the folding-door of the church.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

She there found Cinq-Mars standing, disguised, and anxiously awaiting her. As soon as she recognized him, she advanced with rapid steps into the church, holding her velvet mask over her face, and hastened to take refuge in a confessional, while Henri carefully closed the door of the church by which she had entered. He made sure that it could not be opened on the outside, and then followed his betrothed to kneel within the place of penitence. Arrived an hour before her, with his old valet, he had found this open—a certain and understood sign that the Abbé Quillet, his tutor, awaited him at the accustomed place. His care to prevent any surprise had made him remain himself to guard the entrance until the arrival of Marie. Delighted as he was at the punctuality of the good Abbé, he would still scarcely leave his post to thank him. He was a second father to him in all but authority; and he acted toward the good priest without much ceremony.

The old parish church of St. Eustache was dark. Besides the perpetual lamp, there were only four flambeaux of yellow wax, which, attached above the fonts against the principal pillars, cast a red glimmer upon the blue and black marble of the empty church. The light scarcely penetrated the deep niches of the aisles of the sacred building. In one of the chapels—the darkest of them—was the confessional, of which we have before spoken, whose high iron grating and thick double planks left visible only the small dome and the wooden cross. Here, on either side, knelt Cinq-Mars and Marie de Mantua. They could

CINQ-MARS

scarcely see each other, but found that the Abbé Quillet, seated between them, was there awaiting them. They could see through the little grating the shadow of his hood. Henri d'Effiat approached slowly; he was regulating, as it were, the remainder of his destiny. It was not before his king that he was about to appear, but before a more powerful sovereign, before her for whom he had undertaken his immense work. He was about to test her faith; and he trembled.

He trembled still more when his young betrothed knelt opposite to him; he trembled, because at the sight of this angel he could not help feeling all the happiness he might lose. He dared not speak first, and remained for an instant contemplating her head in the shade, that young head upon which rested all his hopes. Despite his love, whenever he looked upon her he could not refrain from a kind of dread at having undertaken so much for a girl, whose passion was but a feeble reflection of his own, and who perhaps would not appreciate all the sacrifices he had made for her—bending the firm character of his mind to the compliances of a courtier, condemning it to the intrigues and sufferings of ambition, abandoning it to profound combinations, to criminal meditations, to the gloomy labors of a conspirator.

Hitherto, in their secret interviews, she had always received each fresh intelligence of his progress with the transports of pleasure of a child, but without appreciating the labors of each of these so arduous steps that lead to honors, and always asking him with naïvete when he would be Constable, and when they

ALFRED DE VIGNY

should marry, as if she were asking him when he would come to the Caroussel, or whether the weather was fine. Hitherto, he had smiled at these questions and this ignorance, pardonable at eighteen, in a girl born to a throne and accustomed to a grandeur natural to her, which she found around her on her entrance into life; but now he made more serious reflections upon this character. And when, but just quitting the imposing assembly of conspirators, representatives of all the orders of the kingdom, his ear, wherein still resounded the masculine voices that had sworn to undertake a vast war, was struck with the first words of her for whom that war was commenced, he feared for the first time lest this naïveté should be in reality simple levity, not coming from the heart. He resolved to sound it.

"Oh, heavens! how I tremble, Henri!" she said as she entered the confessional; "you make me come without guards, without a coach. I always tremble lest I should be seen by my people coming out of the Hôtel de Nevers. How much longer must I yet conceal myself like a criminal? The Queen was very angry when I avowed the matter to her; and whenever she speaks to me of it, 'tis with her severe air that you know, and which always makes me weep. Oh, I am terribly afraid!"

She was silent; Cinq-Mars replied only with a deep sigh.

"How! you do not speak to me!" she said.

"Are these, then, all your terrors?" asked Cinq-Mars, bitterly.

CINQ-MARS

"Can I have greater? Oh, *mon ami*, in what a tone, with what a voice, do you address me! Are you angry because I came too late?"

"Too soon, Madame, much too soon, for the things you are to hear—for I see you are far from prepared for them."

Marie, affected at the gloomy and bitter tone of his voice, began to weep.

"Alas, what have I done," she said, "that you should call me Madame, and treat me thus harshly?"

"Be tranquil," replied Cinq-Mars, but with irony in his tone. "'Tis not, indeed, you who are guilty; but I—I alone; not toward you, but for you."

"Have you done wrong, then? Have you ordered the death of any one? Oh, no, I am sure you have not, you are so good!"

"What!" said Cinq-Mars, "are you as nothing in my designs? Did I misconstrue your thoughts when you looked at me in the Queen's boudoir? Can I no longer read in your eyes? Was the fire which animated them that of a love for Richelieu? That admiration which you promised to him who should dare to say all to the King, where is it? Is it all a falsehood?"

Marie burst into tears.

"You still speak to me with bitterness," she said; "I have not deserved it. Do you suppose, because I speak not of this fearful conspiracy, that I have forgotten it? Do you not see me miserable at the thought? Must you see my tears? Behold them; I shed enough in secret. Henri, believe that if I have avoided

ALFRED DE VIGNY

this terrible subject in our last interviews, it is from the fear of learning too much. Have I any other thought that that of your dangers? Do I not know that it is for me you incur them? Alas! if you fight for me, have I not also to sustain attacks no less cruel? Happier than I, you have only to combat hatred, while I struggle against friendship. The Cardinal will oppose to you men and weapons; but the Queen, the gentle Anne of Austria, employs only tender advice, caresses, sometimes tears."

"Touching and invincible constraint to make you accept a throne," said Cinq-Mars, bitterly. "I well conceive you must need some efforts to resist such seductions; but first, Madame, I must release you from your vows."

"Alas, great Heaven! what is there, then, against us?"

"There is God above us, and against us," replied Henri, in a severe tone; "the King has deceived me."

There was an agitated movement on the part of the Abbé.

Marie exclaimed, "I foresaw it; this is the misfortune I dreamed and dreamed of! It is I who caused it?"

"He deceived me, as he pressed my hand," continued Cinq-Mars; "he betrayed me by the villain Joseph, whom an offer has been made to me to poniard."

The Abbé gave a start of horror which half opened the door of the confessional.

"O father, fear nothing," said Henri d'Effiat;

CINQ-MARS

“your pupil will never strike such blows. Those I prepare will be heard from afar, and the broad day will light them up; but there remains a duty—a sacred duty—for me to fulfil. Behold your son sacrifice himself before you! Alas! I have not lived long in the sight of happiness, and I am about, perhaps, to destroy it by your hand, that consecrated it.”

As he spoke, he opened the light grating which separated him from his old tutor; the latter, still observing an extraordinary silence, passed his hood over his forehead.

“Restore this nuptial ring to the Duchesse de Mantua,” said Cinq-Mars, in a tone less firm; “I can not keep it unless she give it me a second time, for I am not the same whom she promised to espouse.”

The priest hastily seized the ring, and passed it through the opposite grating; this mark of indifference astonished Cinq-Mars.

“What! Father,” he said, “are you also changed?”

Marie wept no longer; but, raising her angelic voice, which awakened a faint echo along the aisles of the church, as the softest sigh of the organ, she said, returning the ring to Cinq-Mars:

“O dearest, be not angry! I comprehend you not. Can we break asunder what God has just united, and can I leave you, when I know you are unhappy? If the King no longer loves you, at least you may be assured he will not harm you, since he has not harmed the Cardinal, whom he never loved. Do you think yourself undone, because he is perhaps unwilling to separate from his old servant? Well, let

ALFRED DE VIGNY

us await the return of his friendship; forget these conspirators, who affright me. If they give up hope, I shall thank Heaven, for then I shall no longer tremble for you. Why needlessly afflict ourselves? The Queen loves us, and we are both very young; let us wait. The future is beautiful, since we are united and sure of ourselves. Tell me what the King said to you at Chambord. I followed you long with my eyes. Heavens! how sad to me was that hunting party!"

"He has betrayed me, I tell you," answered Cinq-Mars. "Yet who could have believed it, that saw him press our hands, turning from his brother to me, and to the Duc de Bouillon, making himself acquainted with the minutest details of the conspiracy, of the very day on which Richelieu was to be arrested at Lyons, fixing himself the place of his exile (our party desired his death, but the recollection of my father made me ask his life). The King said that he himself would direct the whole affair at Perpignan; yet just before, Joseph, that foul spy, had issued from out of the *cabinet du Lys*. O Marie! shall I own it? at the moment I heard this, my very soul was tossed. I doubted everything; it seemed to me that the centre of the world was unhinged when I found truth quit the heart of the King. I saw our whole edifice crumble to the ground; another hour, and the conspiracy would vanish away, and I should lose you forever. One means remained; I employed it."

"What means?" said Marie.

"The treaty with Spain was in my hand; I signed it."

CINQ-MARS

"Ah, heavens! destroy it."

"It is gone."

"Who bears it?"

"Fontrailles."

"Recall him."

"He will, ere this, have passed the defiles of Oleron," said Cinq-Mars, rising up. "All is ready at Madrid, all at Sedan. Armies await me, Marie—armies! Richelieu is in the midst of them. He totters; it needs but one blow to overthrow him, and you are mine forever—forever the wife of the triumphant Cinq-Mars."

"Of Cinq-Mars the rebel," she said, sighing.

"Well, have it so, the rebel; but no longer the favorite. Rebel, criminal, worthy of the scaffold, I know it," cried the impassioned youth, falling on his knees; "but a rebel for love, a rebel for you, whom my sword will at last achieve for me."

"Alas, a sword imbrued in the blood of your country! Is it not a poniard?"

"Pause! for pity, pause, Marie! Let kings abandon me, let warriors forsake me, I shall only be the more firm; but a word from you will vanquish me, and once again the time for reflection will be passed from me. Yes, I am a criminal; and that is why I still hesitate to think myself worthy of you. Abandon me, Marie; take back the ring."

"I can not," she said; "for I am your wife, whatever you be."

"You hear her, father!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, transported with happiness; "bless this second union,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the work of devotion, even more beautiful than that of love. Let her be mine while I live."

Without answering, the Abbé opened the door of the confessional and had quitted the church ere Cinq-Mars had time to rise and follow him.

"Where are you going? What is the matter?" he cried.

But no one answered.

"Do not call out, in the name of Heaven!" said Marie, "or I am lost; he has doubtless heard some one in the church."

But D'Effiat, agitated, and without answering her, rushed forth, and sought his late tutor through the church, but in vain. Drawing his sword, he proceeded to the entrance which Grandchamp had to guard; he called him and listened.

"Now let him go," said a voice at the corner of the street; and at the same moment was heard the galloping of horses.

"Grandchamp, wilt thou answer?" cried Cinq-Mars.

"Help, Henri, my dear boy!" exclaimed the voice of the Abbé Quillet.

"Whence come you? You endanger me," said the *grand écuyer*, approaching him.

But he saw that his poor tutor, without a hat in the falling snow, was in a most deplorable condition.

"They stopped me, and they robbed me," he cried. "The villains, the assassins! they prevented me from calling out; they stopped my mouth with a handkerchief."



CINQ-MARS

At this noise, Grandchamp at length came, rubbing his eyes, like one just awakened. Laure, terrified, ran into the church to her mistress; all hastily followed her to reassure Marie, and then surrounded the old Abbé.

"The villains! they bound my hands, as you see. There were more than twenty of them; they took from me the key of the side door of the church."

"How! just now?" said Cinq-Mars; and why did you quit us?"

"Quit you! why, they have kept me there two hours."

"Two hours!" cried Henri, terrified.

"Ah, miserable old man that I am!" said Grandchamp; "I have slept while my master was in danger. It is the first time."

"You were not with us, then, in the confessional?" continued Cinq-Mars, anxiously, while Marie tremblingly pressed against his arm.

"What!" said the Abbé, "did you not see the rascal to whom they gave my key?"

"No! whom?" cried all at once.

"Father Joseph," answered the good priest.

"Fly! you are lost!" cried Marie.

CHAPTER XXII

THE STORM

Blow, blow, thou winter wind;
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

. Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly.

Most friendship is feigning; most loving mere folly.

SHAKESPEARE.



AMID that long and superb chain of the Pyrenees which forms the embattled isthmus of the peninsula, in the centre of those blue pyramids, covered in gradation with snow, forests, and downs, there opens a narrow defile, a path cut in the dried-up bed of a perpendicular torrent; it circulates among rocks, glides under bridges of frozen snow, twines along the edges of inundated precipices to scale the adjacent mountains of Urdoz and Oleron, and at last rising over their unequal ridges, turns their nebulous peak into a new country which has also its mountains and its depths, and, quitting France, descends into Spain. Never has the hoof of the mule left its trace in these windings; man himself can with

CINQ-MARS

difficulty stand upright there, even with the hempen boots which can not slip, and the hook of the pike-staff to force into the crevices of the rocks.

In the fine summer months the *pastour*, in his brown cape, and his black long-bearded ram lead hither flocks, whose flowing wool sweeps the turf. Nothing is heard in these rugged places but the sound of the large bells which the sheep carry, and whose irregular tinklings produce unexpected harmonies, casual gamuts, which astonish the traveller and delight the savage and silent shepherd. But when the long month of September comes, a shroud of snow spreads itself from the peak of the mountains down to their base, respecting only this deeply excavated path, a few gorges open by torrents, and some rocks of granite, which stretch out their fantastical forms, like the bones of a buried world.

It is then that light troops of chamois make their appearance, with their twisted horns extending over their backs, spring from rock to rock as if driven before the wind, and take possession of their aerial desert. Flights of ravens and crows incessantly wheel round and round in the gulfs and natural wells which they transform into dark dovecots, while the brown bear, followed by her shaggy family, who sport and tumble around her in the snow, slowly descends from their retreat invaded by the frost. But these are neither the most savage nor the most cruel inhabitants that winter brings into these mountains; the daring smuggler raises for himself a dwelling of wood on the very boundary of nature and of politics. There unknown

ALFRED DE VIGNY

treaties, secret exchanges, are made between the two Navarres, amid fogs and winds.

It was in this narrow path on the frontiers of France that, about two months after the scenes we have witnessed in Paris, two travellers, coming from Spain, stopped at midnight, fatigued and dismayed. They heard musket-shots in the mountain.

"The scoundrels! how they have pursued us!" said one of them. "I can go no farther; but for you I should have been taken."

"And you will be taken still, as well as that infernal paper, if you lose your time in words; there is another volley on the rock of Saint Pierre-de-l'Aigle. Up there, they suppose we have gone in the direction of the Limaçon; but, below, they will see the contrary. Descend; it is doubtless a patrol hunting smugglers. Descend."

"But how? I can not see."

"Never mind, descend. Take my arm."

"Hold me; my boots slip," said the first traveller, stamping on the edge of the rock to make sure of the solidity of the ground before trusting himself upon it.

"Go on; go on!" said the other, pushing him. "There's one of the rascals passing over our heads."

And, in fact, the shadow of a man, armed with a long gun, was reflected on the snow. The two adventurers stood motionless. The man passed on. They continued their descent.

"They will take us," said the one who was supporting the other. "They have turned us. Give me your confounded parchment. I wear the dress of a

CINQ-MARS

smuggler, and I can pass for one seeking an asylum among them; but you would have no resource with your laced dress."

"You are right," said his companion; and, resting his foot against the edge of the rock, and reclining on the slope, he gave him a roll of hollow wood.

A gun was fired, and a ball buried itself, hissing, in the snow at their feet.

"Marked!" said the first. "Roll down. If you are not dead when you get to the bottom, take the road you see before you. On the left of the hollow is Santa Maria. But turn to the right; cross Oleron; and you are on the road to Pau and are saved. Go; roll down."

As he spoke, he pushed his comrade, and without condescending to look after him, and himself neither ascending nor descending, followed the flank of the mountain horizontally, hanging on by rocks, branches, and even by plants, with the strength and energy of a wild-cat, and soon found himself on firm ground before a small wooden hut, through which a light was visible. The adventurer went all around it, like a hungry wolf round a sheepfold, and, applying his eye to one of the openings, apparently saw what determined him, for without further hesitation he pushed the tottering door, which was not even fastened by a latch. The whole hut shook with the blow he had given it. He then saw that it was divided into two cabins by a partition. A large *flambeau* of yellow wax lighted the first. There, a young girl, pale and fearfully thin, was crouched in a corner on the damp

ALFRED DE VIGNY

floor, just where the melted snow ran under the planks of the cottage. Very long black hair, entangled and covered with dust, fell in disorder over her coarse brown dress; the red hood of the Pyrenees covered her head and shoulders. Her eyes were cast down; and she was spinning with a small distaff attached to her waist. The entry of a man did not appear to move her in the least.

"Ha! *la moza*,* get up and give me something to drink. I am tired and thirsty."

The young girl did not answer, and, without raising her eyes, continued to spin assiduously.

"Dost hear?" said the stranger, thrusting her with his foot. "Go and tell thy master that a friend wishes to see him; but first give me some drink. I shall sleep here."

She answered, in a hoarse voice, still spinning:

"I drink the snow that melts on the rock, or the green scum that floats on the water of the swamp. But when I have spun well, they give me water from the iron spring. When I sleep, the cold lizards crawl over my face; but when I have well cleaned a mule, they throw me hay. The hay is warm; the hay is good and warm. I put it under my marble feet."

"What tale art thou telling me?" said Jacques. "I spoke not of thee."

She continued:

"They make me hold a man while they kill him. Oh, what blood I have had on my hands! God forgive them!—if that be possible. They make me hold

* Girl.

CINQ-MARS

his head, and the bucket filled with crimson water. O Heaven!—I, who was the bride of God! They throw their bodies into the abyss of snow; but the vulture finds them; he lines his nest with their hair. I now see thee full of life; I shall see thee bloody, pale, and dead.”

The adventurer, shrugging his shoulders, began to whistle as he passed the second door. Within he found the man he had seen through the chinks of the cabin. He wore the blue *berret* cap of the Basques on one side, and, enveloped in an ample cloak, seated on the pack-saddle of a mule, and bending over a large brazier, smoked a cigar, and from time to time drank from a leather bottle at his side. The light of the brazier showed his full yellow face, as well as the chamber, in which mule-saddles were ranged round the *brasero* as seats. He raised his head without altering his position.

“Oh, oh! is it thou, Jacques?” he said. “Is it thou? Although ’tis four years since I saw thee, I recognize thee. Thou art not changed, brigand! There ’tis still, thy great knave’s face. Sit down there, and take a drink.”

“Yes, here I am. But how the devil camest thou here? I thought thou wert a judge, Houmain!”

“And I thought thou wert a Spanish captain, Jacques!”

“Ah! I was so for a time, and then a prisoner. But I got out of the thing very snugly, and have taken again to the old trade,—the free life, the good smuggling work.”

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“*Viva! viva! Jaleo!*”^{*} cried Houmain. “We brave fellows can turn our hands to everything. Thou camest by the other passes, I suppose, for I have not seen thee since I returned to the trade.”

“Yes, yes; I have passed where thou wilt never pass,” said Jacques.

“And what hast got?”

“A new merchandise. My mules will come to-morrow.”

“Silk sashes, cigars, or linen?”

“Thou wilt know in time, *amigo*,” said the ruffian.

“Give me the skin. I’m thirsty.”

“Here, drink. It’s true Valdepenas! We’re so jolly here, we *bandoleros*! *Ay! jaleo! jaleo!* come, drink; our friends are coming.”

“What friends?” said Jacques, dropping the horn.

“Don’t be uneasy, but drink. I’ll tell thee all about it presently, and then we’ll sing the Andalusian *Tirana*.”[†]

The adventurer took the horn, and assumed an appearance of ease.

“And who’s that great she-devil I saw out there?” he said. “She seems half dead.”

“Oh, no! she’s only mad. Drink; I’ll tell thee all about her.”

And taking from his red sash a long poniard denticulated on each side like a saw, Houmain used it to stir up the fire, and said with vast gravity:

“Thou must know first, if thou dost not know it

^{*} A common Spanish oath.

[†] A kind of ballad.

CINQ-MARS

already, that down below there [he pointed toward France] the old wolf Richelieu carries all before him."

"Ah, ah!" said Jacques.

"Yes; they call him *the king of the King*. Thou knowest? There is, however, a young man almost as strong as he, and whom they call Monsieur le Grand. This young fellow commands almost the whole army of Perpignan at this moment. He arrived there a month ago; but the old fox is still at Narbonne—a very cunning fox, indeed. As to the King, he is sometimes this, sometimes that [as he spoke, Houmain turned his hand outward and inward], *between zist and zest*; but while he is determining, I am for *zist*—that is to say, I'm a Cardinalist. I've been regularly doing business for my lord since the first job he gave me, three years ago. I'll tell thee about it. He wanted some men of firmness and spirit for a little expedition, and sent for me to be Judge-Advocate."

"Ah! a very pretty post, I've heard."

"Yes, 'tis a trade like ours, where they sell cord instead of thread; but it is less honest, for they kill men oftener. But 'tis also more profitable; everything has its price."

"Very properly so," said Jacques.

"Behold me, then, in a red robe. I helped to give a yellow one and brimstone to a fine fellow, who was curé at Loudun, and who had got into a convent of nuns, like a wolf in a fold; and a fine thing he made of it."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"Ha, ha, ha! That's very droll!" laughed Jacques.

"Drink," said Houmain. "Yes, Jago, I saw him after the affair, reduced to a little black heap like this charcoal. See, this charcoal at the end of my poniard. What things we are! That's just what we shall all come to when we go to the Devil."

"Oh, none of these pleasantries!" said the other, very gravely. "You know that I am religious."

"Well, I don't say no; it may be so," said Houmain, in the same tone. "There's Richelieu, a Cardinal! But, no matter. Thou must know, then, as I was Advocate-General, I advocated——"

"Ah, thou art quite a wit!"

"Yes, a little. But, as I was saying, I advocated into my own pocket five hundred piastres, for Armand Duplessis pays his people well, and there's nothing to be said against that, except that the money's not his own; but that's the way with us all. I determined to invest this money in our old trade; and I returned here. Business goes on well. There is sentence of death out against us; and our goods, of course, sell for half as much again as before."

"What's that?" exclaimed Jacques; "lightning at this time of year?"

"Yes, the storms are beginning; we've had two already. We are in the clouds. Dost hear the roll of the thunder? But this is nothing; come, drink. 'Tis almost one in the morning; we'll finish the skin and the night together. As I was telling thee, I made acquaintance with our president—a great scoundrel called Laubardemont. Dost know him?"

CINQ-MARS

"Yes, a little," said Jacques; "he's a regular miser. But never mind that; go on."

"Well, as we had nothing to conceal from one another, I told him of my little commercial plans, and asked him, when any good jobs presented themselves, to think of his judicial comrade; and I've had no cause to complain of him."

"Ah!" said Jacques, "and what has he done?"

"Why, first, two years ago, he himself brought me, on horseback behind him, his niece that thou 'st seen out there."

"His niece!" cried Jacques, rising; "and thou treat'st her like a slave! *Demonio!*"

"Drink," said Houmain, quietly stirring the brazier with his poniard; "he himself desired it should be so. Sit down."

Jacques did so.

"I don't think," continued the smuggler, "that he'd even be sorry to know that she was—dost understand?—to hear she was under the snow rather than above it; but he would not put her there himself, because he's a good relative, as he himself said."

"And as I know," said Jacques; "but go on."

"Thou mayst suppose that a man like him, who lives at court, does not like to have a mad niece in his house. The thing is self-evident; if I'd continued to play my part of the man of the robe, I should have done the same in a similar case. But here, as you perceive, we don't care much for appearances; and I've taken her for a servant. She has shown more good sense than I expected, although she has rarely

ALFRED DE VIGNY

ever spoken more than a single word, and at first came the delicate over us. Now she rubs down a mule like a groom. She has had a slight fever for the last few days; but 'twill pass off one way or the other. But, I say, don't tell Laubardemont that she still lives; he'd think 'twas for the sake of economy I've kept her for a servant."

"How! is he here?" cried Jacques.

"Drink!" replied the phlegmatic Houmain, who himself set the example most assiduously, and began to half shut his eyes with a languishing air. "'Tis the second transaction I've had with this Laubardemont—or demon, or whatever the name is; but 'tis a good devil of a demon, at all events. I love him as I do my eyes; and I will drink his health out of this bottle of Jurançon here. 'Tis the wine of a jolly fellow, the late King Henry. How happy we are here!—Spain on the right hand, France on the left; the wine-skin on one side, the bottle on the other! The bottle! I've left all for the bottle!"

As he spoke, he knocked off the neck of a bottle of white wine. After taking a long draught, he continued, while the stranger closely watched him:

"Yes, he's here; and his feet must be rather cold, for he's been waiting about the mountains ever since sunset, with his guards and our comrades. Thou knowest our *bandoleros*, the true *contrabandistas*?"

"Ah! and what do they hunt?" said Jacques.

"Ah, that's the joke!" answered the drunkard. "'Tis to arrest two rascals, who want to bring here sixty thousand Spanish soldiers in paper in their

CINQ-MARS

pocket. You don't, perhaps, quite understand me, *croquant*. Well, 'tis as I tell thee—in their own pockets.”

“Ay, ay! I understand,” said Jacques, loosening his poniard in his sash, and looking at the door.

“Very well, devil's-skin, let's sing the Tirana. Take the bottle, throw away the cigar, and sing.”

With these words the drunken host began to sing in Spanish, interrupting his song with bumpers, which he threw down his throat, leaning back for the greater ease, while Jacques, still seated, looked at him gloomily by the light of the brazier, and meditated what he should do.

“Yo que soñ contrabandista
I campo por mi respeto,
A todos los desafio,
Puis a nadie tengo miedo.

“Ay! jaleo! Muchachas
Quien me merca un hilo negro?”*

A flash of lightning entered the small window, and filled the room with a sulphurous odor. A fearful clap immediately followed; the cabin shook; and a beam fell outside.

“Hallo, the house!” cried the drunken man; “the Devil's among us; and our friends are not come!”

“Sing!” said Jacques, drawing the pack upon which he was close to that of Houmain.

* “I, who am a contrabandist, am respected by all. I take care of myself, and fear no one. *Ay! jaleo!* Girls, who'll buy some black thread?”

ALFRED DE VIGNY

The latter drank to encourage himself, and then continued:

“Mi caballo esta cansado,
Y yo me marchó corriendo.

“Ay! ay! que viene la ronda,
Y se mueve el tiroteo;
Ay! ay! cavallito mio,
Ay! saca me deste aprieto.

“Viva, viva mi cavallo,
Cavallo mio carreto;
Ay! jaleo! Muchachas, ay! jaleo—”*

As he ended, he felt his seat totter, and fell backward; Jacques, thus freed from him, sprang toward the door, when it opened, and his head struck against the cold, pale face of the mad-woman. He recoiled.

“The Judge!” she said, as she entered; and she fell prostrate on the cold ground.

Jacques had already passed one foot over her; but another face appeared, livid and surprised—that of a very tall man, enveloped in a cloak covered with snow. He again recoiled, and laughed a laugh of terror and rage. It was Laubardemont, followed by armed men; they looked at one another.

“Ah, com-r-a-d-e, yo-u ra-a-scal!” hiccuped Houmain, rising with difficulty; “thou’rt a Royalist.”

But when he saw these two men, who seemed petri-

* “My horse is tired. I go by his side running. *Ay! ay!* here comes the round, and there’s a shot! *Ay*, my little horse! get me out of this scrape. *Viva*, my horse! *Ay! jaleo!* Girls,” etc.

CINQ-MARS

fied by each other, he became silent, as conscious of his intoxication; and he reeled forward to raise up the mad-woman, who was still lying between the Judge and the Captain. The former spoke first.

"Are you not he we have been pursuing?"

"It is he!" said the armed men, with one voice; "the other has escaped."

Jacques receded to the split planks that formed the tottering wall of the hut; enveloping himself in his cloak, like a bear forced against a tree by the hounds, and, wishing to gain a moment's respite for reflection, he said, firmly:

"The first who passes that brazier and the body of that girl is a dead man."

And he drew a long poniard from his cloak. At this moment Houmain, kneeling, turned the head of the girl. Her eyes were closed; he drew her toward the brazier, which lighted up her face.

"Ah, heavens!" cried Laubardemont, forgetting himself in his fright; "Jeanne again!"

"Be calm, my lo-lord," said Houmain, trying to open the eyelids, which closed again, and to raise her head, which fell back again like wet linen; "be, be-calm! Do-n't ex-cite yourself; she's dead, de-cidedly."

Jacques put his foot on the body as on a barrier, and, looking with a ferocious laugh in the face of Laubardemont, said to him in a low voice:

"Let me pass, and I will not compromise thee, courtier; I will not tell that she was thy niece, and that I am thy son."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Laubardemont collected himself, looked at his men, who pressed around him with advanced carabines; and, signing them to retire a few steps, he answered in a very low voice:

“Give me the treaty, and thou shalt pass.”

“Here it is, in my girdle; touch it, and I will call you my father aloud. What will thy master say?”

“Give it me, and I will spare thy life.”

“Let me pass, and I will pardon thy having given me that life.”

“Still the same, brigand?”

“Ay, assassin.”

“What matters to thee that boy conspirator?” asked the Judge.

“What matters to thee that old man who reigns?” answered the other.

“Give me that paper; I’ve sworn to have it.”

“Leave it with me; I’ve sworn to carry it back.”

“What can be thy oath and thy God?” demanded Laubardemont.

“And thine?” replied Jacques. “Is’t the crucifix of red-hot iron?”

Here Houmain, rising between them, laughing and staggering, said to the Judge, slapping him on the shoulder:

“You are a long time coming to an understanding, friend; do-on’t you know him of old? He’s a very good fellow.”

“I? no!” cried Laubardemont, aloud; “I never saw him before.”

At this moment, Jacques, who was protected by

CINQ-MARS

the drunkard and the smallness of the crowded chamber, sprang violently against the weak planks that formed the wall, and by a blow of his heel knocked two of them out, and passed through the space thus created. The whole side of the cabin was broken; it tottered, and the wind rushed in.

“Hallo! *Demonio!* *Santo Demonio!* where art going?” cried the smuggler; “thou art breaking my house down, and on the side of the ravine, too.”

All cautiously approached, tore away the planks that remained, and leaned over the abyss. They contemplated a strange spectacle. The storm raged in all its fury; and it was a storm of the Pyrenees. Enormous flashes of lightning came all at once from all parts of the horizon, and their fires succeeded so quickly that there seemed no interval; they appeared to be a continuous flash. It was but rarely the flaming vault would suddenly become obscure; and it then instantly resumed its glare. It was not the light that seemed strange on this night, but the darkness. The tall thin peaks and whitened rocks stood out from the red background like blocks of marble on a cupola of burning brass, and resembled, amid the snows, the wonders of a volcano; the waters gushed from them like flames; the snow poured down like dazzling lava.

In this moving mass a man was seen struggling, whose efforts only involved him deeper and deeper in the whirling and liquid gulf; his knees were already buried. In vain he clasped his arms round an enormous pyramidal and transparent icicle, which reflected

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the lightning like a rock of crystal; the icicle itself was melting at its base, and slowly bending over the declivity of the rock. Under the covering of snow, masses of granite were heard striking against each other, as they descended into the vast depths below. Yet they could still save him; a space of scarcely four feet separated him from Laubardemont.

"I sink!" he cried; "hold out to me something, and thou shalt have the treaty."

"Give it me, and I will reach thee this musket," said the Judge.

"There it is," replied the ruffian, "since the Devil is for Richelieu!" and taking one hand from the hold of his slippery support, he threw a roll of wood into the cabin. Laubardemont rushed back upon the treaty like a wolf on his prey. Jacques in vain held out his arm; he slowly glided away with the enormous thawing block turned upon him, and was silently buried in the snow.

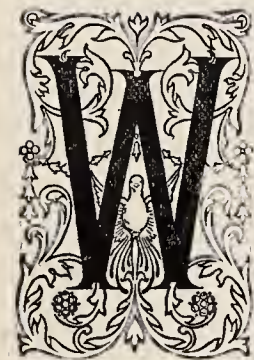
"Ah, villain," were his last words, "thou hast deceived me! but thou didst not take the treaty from me. I gave it thee, *Father!*" and he disappeared wholly under the thick white bed of snow. Nothing was seen in his place but the glittering flakes which the lightning had ploughed up, as it became extinguished in them; nothing was heard but the rolling of the thunder and the dash of the water against the rocks, for the men in the half-ruined cabin, grouped round a corpse and a villain, were silent, tongue-tied with horror, and fearing lest God himself should send a thunderbolt upon them.

CHAPTER XXIII

ABSENCE

L'absence est le plus grand des maux,
Non pas pour vous, cruelle!

LA FONTAINE.



WHO has not found a charm in watching the clouds of heaven as they float along? Who has not envied them the freedom of their journeyings through the air, whether rolled in great masses by the wind, and colored by the sun, they advance peacefully, like fleets of dark ships with gilt prows, or sprinkled in light groups, they glide quickly on, airy and elongated, like birds of passage, transparent as vast opals detached from the treasury of the heavens, or glittering with whiteness, like snows from the mountains carried on the wings of the winds?

Man is a slow traveller who envies those rapid journeyers; less rapid than his imagination, they have yet seen in a single day all the places he loves, in remembrance or in hope,—those that have witnessed his happiness or his misery, and those so beautiful countries unknown to us, where we expect to find everything at once. Doubtless there is not a spot on the whole earth, a wild rock, an arid plain, over which we pass with indifference, that has not

ALFRED DE VIGNY

been consecrated in the life of some man, and is not painted in his remembrance; for, like battered vessels, before meeting inevitable wreck, we leave some fragment of ourselves on every rock.

Whither go the dark-blue clouds of that storm of the Pyrenees? It is the wind of Africa which drives them before it with a fiery breath. They fly; they roll over one another, growlingly throwing out lightning before them, as their torches, and leaving suspended behind them a long train of rain, like a vaporous robe. Freed by an effort from the rocky defiles that for a moment had arrested their course, they irrigate, in Béarn, the picturesque patrimony of Henri IV; in Guienne, the conquests of Charles VII; in Saintogne, Poitou, and Touraine, those of Charles V and of Philip Augustus; and at last, slackening their pace above the old domain of Hugh Capet, halt murmuring on the towers of St.-Germain.

"O Madame!" exclaimed Marie de Mantua to the Queen, "do you see this storm coming up from the south?"

"You often look in that direction, *ma chère*," answered Anne of Austria, leaning on the balcony.

"It is the direction of the sun, Madame."

"And of tempests, you see," said the Queen. "Trust in my friendship, my child; these clouds can bring no happiness to you. I would rather see you turn your eyes toward Poland. See the fine people you might command."

At this moment, to avoid the rain, which began to fall, the Prince-Palatine passed rapidly under the win-

CINQ-MARS

dows of the Queen, with a numerous suite of young Poles on horseback. Their Turkish vests, with buttons of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies; their green and gray cloaks; the lofty plumes of their horses, and their adventurous air—gave them a singular *éclat* to which the court had easily become accustomed. They paused for a moment, and the Prince made two salutes, while the light animal he rode passed gracefully sideways, keeping his front toward the princesses; prancing and snorting, he shook his mane, and seemed to salute by putting his head between his legs. The whole suite repeated the evolution as they passed. The Princesse Marie had at first shrunk back, lest they should see her tears; but the brilliant and flattering spectacle made her return to the balcony, and she could not help exclaiming:

“How gracefully the Palatine rides that beautiful horse! he seems scarce conscious of it.”

The Queen smiled, and said:

“He is conscious about her who might be his queen to-morrow, if she would but make a sign of the head, and let but one glance from her great black almond-shaped eyes be turned on that throne, instead of always receiving these poor foreigners with poutings, as now.”

And Anne of Austria kissed the cheek of Marie, who could not refrain from smiling also; but she instantly sunk her head, reproaching herself, and resumed her sadness, which seemed gliding from her. She even needed once more to contemplate the great clouds that hung over the château.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"Poor child," continued the Queen, "thou dost all thou canst to be very faithful, and to keep thyself in the melancholy of thy romance. Thou art making thyself ill with weeping when thou shouldst be asleep, and with not eating. Thou passest the night in revery and in writing; but I warn thee, thou wilt get nothing by it, except making thyself thin and less beautiful, and the not being a queen. Thy Cinq-Mars is an ambitious youth, who has lost himself."

Seeing Marie conceal her head in her handkerchief to weep, Anne of Austria for a moment reëntered her chamber, leaving Marie in the balcony, and feigned to be looking for some jewels at her toilet-table; she soon returned, slowly and gravely, to the window. Marie was more calm, and was gazing sorrowfully at the landscape before her, the hills in the distance, and the storm gradually spreading itself.

The Queen resumed in a more serious tone:

"God has been more merciful to you than your imprudence perhaps deserved, Marie. He has saved you from great danger. You were willing to make great sacrifices, but fortunately they have not been accomplished as you expected. Innocence has saved you from love. You are as one who, thinking she has swallowed a deadly poison, has in reality drunk only pure and harmless water."

"Ah, Madame, what mean you? Am I not unhappy enough already?"

"Do not interrupt me," said the Queen; "you will, ere long, see your present position with different eyes. I will not accuse you of ingratitude toward the Car-

CINQ-MARS

dinal; I have too many reasons for not liking him. I myself witnessed the rise of the conspiracy. Still, you should remember, *ma chère*, that he was the only person in France who, against the opinion of the Queen-mother and of the court, insisted upon war with the duchy of Mantua, which he recovered from the empire and from Spain, and returned to the Duc de Nevers, your father. Here, in this very château of Saint-Germain, was signed the treaty which deposed the Duke of Guastalla.* You were then very young; they must, however, have told you of it. Yet here, through love alone (I am willing to believe, with yourself, that it is so), a young man of two-and-twenty is ready to get him assassinated.”

“O Madame, he is incapable of such a deed. I swear to you that he has refused to adopt it.”

“I have begged you, Marie, to let me speak. I know that he is generous and loyal. I am willing to believe that, contrary to the custom of our times, he would not go so far as to kill an old man, as did the Chevalier de Guise. But can he prevent his assassination, if his troops make him prisoner? This we can not say, any more than he. God alone knows the future. It is, at all events, certain that it is for you he attacks him, and, to overthrow him, is preparing civil war, which perhaps is bursting forth at the very moment that we speak—a war without success. Whichever way it turns, it can only effect evil, for Monsieur is going to abandon the conspiracy.”

“How, Madame?”

* The 19th of May, 1632.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"Listen to me. I tell you I am certain of it; I need not explain myself further. What will the *grand écuyer* do? The King, as he rightly anticipated, has gone to consult the Cardinal. To consult him is to yield to him; but the treaty of Spain is signed. If it be discovered, what can Monsieur de Cinq-Mars do? Do not tremble thus. We will save him; we will save his life, I promise you. There is yet time, I hope."

"Ah, Madame, you hope! I am lost!" cried Marie, half fainting.

"Let us sit down," said the Queen; and, placing herself near Marie, at the entrance to the chamber, she continued:

"Doubtless Monsieur will treat for all the conspirators in treating for himself; but exile will be the least punishment, perpetual exile. Behold, then, the Duchesse de Nevers and Mantua, the Princesse Marie de Gonzaga, the wife of Monsieur Henri d'Effiat, Marquis de Cinq-Mars, exiled!"

"Well, Madame, I will follow him into exile. It is my duty; I am his wife!" exclaimed Marie, sobbing. "I would I knew he were already banished and in safety."

"Dreams of eighteen!" said the Queen, supporting Marie. "Awake, child, awake! you must. I deny not the good qualities of Monsieur de Cinq-Mars. He has a lofty character, a vast mind, and great courage; but he may no longer be aught for you, and, fortunately, you are not his wife, or even his betrothed."

CINQ-MARS

“I am his, Madame—his alone.”

“But without the benediction,” replied Anne of Austria; “in a word, without marriage. No priest would have dared—not even your own; he told me so. Be silent!” she added, putting her two beautiful hands on Marie’s lips. “Be silent! You would say that God heard your vow; that you can not live without him; that your destinies are inseparable from his; that death alone can break your union? The phrases of your age, delicious chimeras of a moment, at which one day you will smile, happy at not having to lament them all your life. Of the many and brilliant women you see around me at court, there is not one but at your age had some beautiful dream of love, like this of yours, who did not form those ties, which they believed indissoluble, and who did not in secret take eternal oaths. Well, these dreams are vanished, these knots broken, these oaths forgotten; and yet you see them happy women and mothers. Surrounded by the honors of their rank, they laugh and dance every night. I again divine what you would say—they loved not as you love, eh? You deceive yourself, my dear child; they loved as much, and wept no less.

“And here I must make you acquainted with that great mystery which constitutes your despair, since you are ignorant of the malady that devours you. We have a two-fold existence, *m’amie*: our internal life, that of our feelings powerfully works within us, while the external life dominates despite ourselves. We are never independent of men, more especially in an elevated condition. Alone, we think ourselves mistresses

ALFRED DE VIGNY

of our destiny; but the entrance of two or three people fastens on all our chains, by recalling our rank and our retinue. Nay; shut yourself up and abandon yourself to all the daring and extraordinary resolutions that the passions may raise up in you, to the marvellous sacrifices they may suggest to you. A lackey coming and asking your orders will at once break the charm and bring you back to your real life. It is this contest between your projects and your position which destroys you. You are invariably angry with yourself; you bitterly reproach yourself."

Marie turned away her head.

"Yes, you believe yourself criminal. Pardon yourself, Marie; all men are beings so relative and so dependent one upon another that I know not whether the great retreats of the world that we sometimes see are not made for the world itself. Despair has its pursuits, and solitude its coquetry. It is said that the gloomiest hermits can not refrain from inquiring what men say of them. This need of public opinion is beneficial, in that it combats, almost always victoriously, that which is irregular in our imagination, and comes to the aid of duties which we too easily forget. One experiences (you will feel it, I hope) in returning to one's proper lot, after the sacrifice of that which had diverted the reason, the satisfaction of an exile returning to his family, of a sick person at sight of the sun after a night afflicted with frightful dreams.

"It is this feeling of a being returned, as it were, to its natural state that creates the calm which you see in many eyes that have also had their tears—for there

CINQ-MARS

are few women who have not known tears such as yours. You would think yourself perjured if you renounced Cinq-Mars! But nothing binds you; you have more than acquitted yourself toward him by refusing for more than two years past the royal hands offered you. And, after all, what has he done, this impassioned lover? He has elevated himself to reach you; but may not the ambition which here seems to you to have aided love have made use of that love? This young man seems to me too profound, too calm in his political stratagems, too independent in his vast resolutions, in his colossal enterprises, for me to believe him solely occupied by his tenderness. If you have been but a means instead of an end, what would you say?"

"I would still love him," answered Marie. "While he lives, I am his."

"And while I live," said the Queen, with firmness, "I will oppose the alliance."

At these last words the rain and hail fell violently on the balcony. The Queen took advantage of the circumstance abruptly to leave the room and pass into that where the Duchesse de Chevreuse, Mazarin, Madame de Gueménée, and the Prince-Palatine had been awaiting her for a short time. The Queen walked up to them. Marie placed herself in the shade of a curtain in order to conceal the redness of her eyes. She was at first unwilling to take part in the sprightly conversation; but some words of it attracted her attention. The Queen was showing to the Princesse de Gueménée diamonds she had just received from Paris.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“As for this crown, it does not belong to me. The King had it prepared for the future Queen of Poland. Who that is to be, we know not.” Then turning toward the Prince-Palatine, “We saw you pass, Prince. Whom were you going to visit?”

“Mademoiselle la Duchesse de Rohan,” answered the Pole.

The insinuating Mazarin, who availed himself of every opportunity to worm out secrets, and to make himself necessary by forced confidences, said, approaching the Queen:

“That comes very *à propos*, just as we were speaking of the crown of Poland.”

Marie, who was listening, could not hear this, and said to Madame de Gueménée, who was at her side:

“Is Monsieur de Chabot, then, King of Poland?”

The Queen heard that, and was delighted at this touch of pride. In order to develop its germ, she affected an approving attention to the conversation that ensued:

The Princesse de Gueménée exclaimed:

“Can you conceive such a marriage? We really can’t get it out of our heads. This same Mademoiselle de Rohan, whom we have seen so haughty, after having refused the Comte de Soissons, the Duc de Weimar, and the Duc de Nemours, to marry Monsieur de Chabot, a simple gentleman! ’Tis really a sad pity! What are we coming to? ’Tis impossible to say what it will all end in.”

Mazarin added, slyly:

CINQ-MARS

“What! can it be true? Love at court! a real love affair! Can it be believed?”

All this time the Queen continued opening and shutting and playing with the new crown.

“Diamonds suit only black hair,” she said. “Let us see. Let me put it on you, Marie. Why, it suits her to admiration!”

“One would suppose it had been made for Madame la Princesse,” said the Cardinal.

“I would give the last drop of my blood for it to remain on that brow,” said the Prince-Palatine.

Marie, through the tears that were still on her cheek, gave an infantine and involuntary smile, like a ray of sunshine through rain. Then, suddenly blushing deeply, she hastily took refuge in her apartments.

All present laughed. The Queen followed her with her eyes, smiled, presented her hand for the Polish ambassador to kiss, and retired to write a letter.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WORK

Peu d'espérance doivent avoir les pauvres et menues gens au fait de ce monde, puisque si grand Roy a tant souffert et tant travaillé.—**PHILIPPE DE COMINES.**



NE night, before Perpignan, a very unusual event took place. It was ten o'clock; and all were asleep. The slow and almost suspended operations of the siege had rendered the camp and the town inactive. The Spaniards troubled themselves little about the French, all communication toward Catalonia being open as in time of peace; and in the French army men's minds were agitated with that secret anxiety which precedes great events.

Yet all was calm; no sound was heard but that of the measured tread of the sentries. Nothing was seen in the dark night but the red light of the matches of their guns, always smoking, when suddenly the trumpets of the musketeers, of the light-horse, and of the men-at-arms sounded almost simultaneously, "boot and saddle," and "to horse." All the sentinels cried to arms; and the sergeants, with flambeaux, went from tent to tent, a long pike in their hands, to waken the soldiers, range them in lines, and count them. Some files

CINQ-MARS

marched in gloomy silence along the streets of the camp, and took their position in battle array. The sound of the mounted squadrons announced that the heavy cavalry were making the same dispositions. After half an hour of movement the noise ceased, the torches were extinguished, and all again became calm, but the army was on foot.

One of the last tents of the camp shone within as a star with flambeaux. On approaching this little white and transparent pyramid, we might have distinguished the shadows of two men reflected on the canvas as they walked to and fro within. Outside several men on horseback were in attendance; inside were De Thou and Cinq-Mars.

To see the pious and wise De Thou thus up and armed at this hour, you might have taken him for one of the chiefs of the revolt. But a closer examination of his serious countenance and mournful expression immediately showed that he blamed it, and allowed himself to be led into it and endangered by it from an extraordinary resolution which aided him to surmount the horror he had of the enterprise itself. From the day when Henri d'Effiat had opened his heart and confided to him its whole secret, he had seen clearly that all remonstrance was vain with a young man so powerfully resolved.

De Thou had even understood what M. de Cinq-Mars had not told him, and had seen in the secret union of his friend with the Princesse Marie, one of those ties of love whose mysterious and frequent faults, voluptuous and involuntary derelictions, could not be

ALFRED DE VIGNY

too soon purified by public benediction. He had comprehended that punishment, impossible to be supported long by a lover, the adored master of that young girl, and who was condemned daily to appear before her as a stranger, to receive political disclosures of marriages they were preparing for her. The day when he received his entire confession, he had done all in his power to prevent Cinq-Mars going so far in his projects as the foreign alliance. He had evoked the gravest recollections and the best feelings, without any other result than rendering the invincible resolution of his friend more rude toward him. Cinq-Mars, it will be recollected, had said to him harshly, "Well, did I ask you to take part in this conspiracy?" And he had desired only to promise not to denounce it; and he had collected all his power against friendship to say, "Expect nothing further from me if you sign this treaty." Yet Cinq-Mars had signed the treaty; and De Thou was still there with him.

The habit of familiarly discussing the projects of his friend had perhaps rendered them less odious to him. His contempt for the vices of the Prime-Minister; his indignation at the servitude of the parliaments to which his family belonged, and at the corruption of justice; the powerful names, and more especially the noble characters of the men who directed the enterprise—all had contributed to soften down his first painful impression. Having once promised secrecy to M. de Cinq-Mars, he considered himself as in a position to accept in detail all the secondary disclosures; and since the fortuitous event which had compromised him with the

CINQ-MARS

conspirators at the house of Marion de Lorme, he considered himself united to them by honor, and engaged to an inviolable secrecy. Since that time he had seen Monsieur, the Duc de Bouillon, and Fontrailles; they had become accustomed to speak before him without constraint, and he to hear them.

The dangers which threatened his friend now drew him into their vortex like an invincible magnet. His conscience accused him; but he followed Cinq-Mars wherever he went without even, from excess of delicacy, hazarding a single expression which might resemble a personal fear. He had tacitly given up his life, and would have deemed it unworthy of both to manifest a desire to regain it.

The master of the horse was in his cuirass; he was armed, and wore large boots. An enormous pistol, with a lighted match, was placed upon his table between two flambeaux. A heavy watch in a brass case lay near the pistol. De Thou, wrapped in a black cloak, sat motionless with folded arms. Cinq-Mars paced backward and forward, his arms crossed behind his back, from time to time looking at the hand of the watch, too sluggish in his eyes. He opened the tent, looked up to the heavens, and returned.

"I do not see my star there," said he; "but no matter. She is here in my heart."

"The night is dark," said De Thou.

"Say rather that the time draws nigh. It advances, my friend; it advances. Twenty minutes more, and all will be accomplished. The army only waits the report of this pistol to begin."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

De Thou held in his hand an ivory crucifix, and looking first at the cross, and then toward heaven, "Now," said he, "is the hour to complete the sacrifice. I repent not; but oh, how bitter is the cup of sin to my lips! I had vowed my days to innocence and to the works of the soul, and here I am about to commit a crime, and to draw the sword."

But forcibly seizing the hand of Cinq-Mars, "It is for you, for you!" he added with the enthusiasm of a blindly devoted heart. "I rejoice in my errors if they turn to your glory. I see but your happiness in my fault. Forgive me if I have returned for a moment to the habitual thought of my whole life."

Cinq-Mars looked steadfastly at him; and a tear stole slowly down his cheek.

"Virtuous friend," said he, "may your fault fall only on my head! But let us hope that God, who pardons those who love, will be for us; for we are criminal—I through love, you through friendship."

Then suddenly looking at the watch, he took the long pistol in his hand, and gazed at the smoking match with a fierce air. His long hair fell over his face like the mane of a young lion.

"Do not consume," said he; "burn slowly. Thou art about to light a flame which the waves of ocean can not extinguish. The flame will soon light half Europe; it may perhaps reach the wood of thrones. Burn slowly, precious flame! The winds which fan thee are violent and fearful; they are love and hatred. Reserve thyself! Thy explosion will be heard afar, and will find echoes in the peasant's hut and the king's palace.

CINQ-MARS

Burn, burn, poor flame! Thou art to me a sceptre and a thunderbolt!"

De Thou, still holding his ivory crucifix in his hand, said in a low voice:

"Lord, pardon us the blood that will be shed! We combat the wicked and the impious." Then, raising his voice, "My friend, the cause of virtue will triumph," he said; "it alone will triumph. God has ordained that the guilty treaty should not reach us; that which constituted the crime is no doubt destroyed. We shall fight without the foreigners, and perhaps we shall not fight at all. God will change the heart of the king."

"'Tis the hour! 'tis the hour!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, his eyes fixed upon the watch with a kind of savage joy; "four minutes more, and the Cardinalists in the camp will be crushed! We shall march upon Narbonne! He is there! Give me the pistol!"

At these words he hastily opened the tent, and took up the match.

"A courier from Paris! an express from court!" cried a voice outside, as a man, heated with hard riding and overcome with fatigue, threw himself from his horse, entered, and presented a letter to Cinq-Mars.

"From the Queen, Monseigneur," he said. Cinq-Mars turned pale, and read as follows:

M. DE CINQ-MARS: I write this letter to entreat and conjure you to restore to her duties our well-beloved adopted daughter and friend, the Princesse Marie de Gonzaga, whom your affection alone turns from the throne of Poland, which has been offered to her. I have sounded her heart. She is very young, and I have good reason to believe that she would accept the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

crown *with less effort and less grief than you may perhaps imagine.*

It is for her you have undertaken a war which will put to fire and sword my beautiful and beloved France. I supplicate and implore you to act as a gentleman, and nobly to release the Duchesse de Mantua from the promises she may have made you. Thus restore repose to her soul, and peace to our beloved country.

The Queen, who will throw herself at your feet if need be,
ANNE.

Cinq-Mars calmly replaced the pistol upon the table; his first impulse had been to turn its muzzle upon himself. However, he laid it down, and snatching a pencil, wrote on the back of the letter;

MADAME: Marie de Gonzaga, being my wife, can not be Queen of Poland until after my death. I die.

CINQ-MARS.

Then, as if he would not allow himself time for a moment's reflection, he forced the letter into the hands of the courier.

"To horse! to horse!" cried he, in a furious tone. "If you remain another instant, you are a dead man!"

He saw him gallop off, and reëntered the tent. Alone with his friend, he remained an instant standing, but pale, his eyes fixed, and looking on the ground like a madman. He felt himself totter.

"De Thou!" he cried.

"What would you, my friend, my dear friend? I am with you. You have acted grandly, most grandly, sublimely!"

CINQ-MARS

“De Thou!” he cried again, in a hollow voice, and fell with his face to the ground, like an uprooted tree.

Violent tempests assume different aspects, according to the climates in which they take place. Those which have spread over a terrible space in northern countries assemble into one single cloud under the torrid zone—the more formidable, that they leave the horizon in all its purity, and that the furious waves still reflect the azure of heaven while tinged with the blood of man. It is the same with great passions. They assume strange aspects according to our characters; but how terrible are they in vigorous hearts, which have preserved their force under the veil of social forms? When youth and despair embrace, we know not to what fury they may rise, or what may be their sudden resignation; we know not whether the volcano will burst the mountain or become suddenly extinguished within its entrails.

De Thou, in alarm, raised his friend. The blood gushed from his nostrils and ears; he would have thought him dead, but for the torrents of tears which flowed from his eyes. They were the only sign of life. Suddenly he opened his lids, looked around him, and by an extraordinary energy resumed his senses and the power of his will.

“I am in the presence of men,” said he; “I must finish with them. My friend, it is half-past eleven; the hour for the signal has passed. Give, in my name, the order to return to quarters. It was a false alarm, which I will myself explain this evening.”

De Thou had already perceived the importance of this order; he went out and returned immediately.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

He found Cinq-Mars seated, calm, and endeavoring to cleanse the blood from his face.

“De Thou,” said he, looking fixedly at him, “retire; you disturb me.”

“I leave you not,” answered the latter.

“Fly, I tell you! the Pyrenees are not far distant. I can not speak much longer, even to you; but if you remain with me, you will die. I give you warning.”

“I remain,” repeated De Thou.

“May God preserve you, then!” answered Cinq-Mars, “for I can do nothing more; the moment has passed. I leave you here. Call Fontrailles and all the confederates: distribute these passports among them. Let them fly immediately; tell them all has failed, but that I thank them. For you, once again I say, fly with them, I entreat you; but whatever you do, follow me not—follow me not, for your life! I swear to you not to do violence to myself!”

With these words, shaking his friend’s hand without looking at him, he rushed from the tent.

Meantime, some leagues thence another conversation was taking place. At Narbonne, in the same cabinet in which we formerly beheld Richelieu regulating with Joseph the interests of the State, were still seated the same men, nearly as we have described them. The minister, however, had grown much older in three years of suffering; and the Capuchin was as much terrified with the result of his expedition as his master appeared tranquil.

The Cardinal, seated in his armchair, his legs bound and encased with furs and warm clothing, had upon

CINQ-MARS

his knees three kittens, which gambolled upon his scarlet robe. Every now and then he took one of them and placed it upon the others, to continue their sport. He smiled as he watched them. On his feet lay their mother, looking like an enormous animated muff.

Joseph, seated near him, was going over the account of all he had heard in the confessional. Pale even now, at the danger he had run of being discovered, or of being murdered by Jacques, he concluded thus:

“In short, your Eminence, I can not help feeling agitated to my heart’s core when I reflect upon the dangers which have, and still do, threaten you. Assassins offer themselves to poniard you. I beheld in France the whole court against you, one half of the army, and two provinces. Abroad, Spain and Portugal are ready to furnish troops. Everywhere there are snares or battles, poniards or cannon.”

The Cardinal yawned three times, without discontinuing his amusement, and then said:

“A cat is a very fine animal. It is a drawing-room tiger. What suppleness, what extraordinary finesse! Here is this little yellow one pretending to sleep, in order that the tortoise-shell one may not notice it, but fall upon its brother; and this one, how it tears the other! See how it sticks its claws into its side! It would kill and eat it, I fully believe, if it were the stronger. It is very amusing. What pretty animals!”

He coughed and sneezed for some time; then he continued:

“Messire Joseph, I sent word to you not to speak to me of business until after my supper. I have an appe-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

tite now, and it is not yet my hour. Chicot, my doctor, recommends regularity, and I feel my usual pain in my side. This is how I shall spend the evening," he added, looking at the clock. "At nine, we will settle the affairs of Monsieur le Grand. At ten, I shall be carried round the garden to take the air by moonlight. Then I shall sleep for an hour or two. At midnight the King will be here; and at four o'clock you may return to receive the various orders for arrests, condemnations, or any others I may have to give you, for the provinces, Paris, or the armies of his Majesty."

Richelieu said all this in the same tone of voice, with a uniform enunciation, affected only by the weakness of his chest and the loss of several teeth.

It was seven in the evening. The Capuchin withdrew. The Cardinal supped with the greatest tranquillity; and when the clock struck half-past eight, he sent for Joseph, and said to him, when he was seated:

"This, then, is all they have been able to do against me during more than two years. They are poor creatures, truly! The Duc de Bouillon, whom I thought possessed some ability, has forfeited all claim to my opinion. I have watched him closely; and I ask you, has he taken one step worthy of a true statesman? The King, Monsieur, and the rest, have only shown their teeth against me, and without depriving me of one single man. The young Cinq-Mars is the only man among them who has any consecutiveness of ideas. All that he has done has been done surprisingly well. I must do him justice; he had good qualities. I should have made him my pupil, had it not been for his obstinate

CINQ-MARS

character. But he has here charged me à l'outrance, and must take the consequences. I am sorry for him. I have left them to float about in open water for the last two years. I shall now draw the net."

"It is time, Monseigneur," said Joseph, who often trembled involuntarily as he spoke. "Do you bear in mind that from Perpignan to Narbonne the way is short? Do you know that if your army here is powerful, your own troops are weak and uncertain; that the young nobles are furious; and that the King is not sure?"

The Cardinal looked at the clock.

"It is only half-past eight, Joseph. I have already told you that I will not talk about this affair until nine. Meantime, as justice must be done, you will write what I shall dictate, for my memory serves me well. There are still some objectionable persons left, I see by my notes—four of the judges of Urbain Grandier. He was a rare genius, that Urbain Grandier," he added, with a malicious expression. Joseph bit his lips. "All the other judges have died miserably. As to Houmain, he shall be hanged as a smuggler by and by. We may leave him alone for the present. But there is that horrible Lactantius, who lives peacefully, Barré, and Mignon. Take a pen, and write to the Bishop of Poitiers,

"MONSEIGNEUR: It is his Majesty's pleasure that Fathers Mignon and Barré be superseded in their curés, and sent with the shortest possible delay to the town of Lyons, with Father Lactantius, Capuchin, to be tried before a special tribunal, charged with criminal intentions against the State."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Joseph wrote as coolly as a Turk strikes off a head at a sign from his master. The Cardinal said to him, while signing the letter:

"I will let you know how I wish them to disappear, for it is important to efface all traces of that affair. Providence has served me well. In removing these men, I complete its work. That is all that posterity shall know of the affair."

And he read to the Capuchin that page of his memoirs in which he recounts the possession and sorceries of the magician.* During this slow process, Joseph could not help looking at the clock.

"You are anxious to come to Monsieur le Grand," said the Cardinal at last. "Well, then, to please you, let us begin.

"Do you think I have not my reasons for being tranquil? You think that I have allowed these poor conspirators to go too far. No, no! Here are some little papers that would reassure you, did you know their contents. First, in this hollow stick is the treaty with Spain, seized at Oleron. I am well satisfied with Laubardemont; he is an able man."

The fire of ferocious jealousy sparkled under the thick eyebrows of the monk.

"Ah, Monseigneur," said he, "you know not from whom he seized it. He certainly suffered him to die, and in that respect we can not complain, for he was the agent of the conspiracy; but it was his son."

"Say you the truth?" cried the Cardinal, in a severe

* Collect. des Mémoires xxviii. 189.

CINQ-MARS

tone. "Yes, for you dare not lie to me. How knew you this?"

"From his attendants, Monsiigneur. Here are their reports. They will testify to them."

The Cardinal having examined these papers, said:

"We will employ him once more to try our conspirators, and then you shall do as you like with him. I give him to you."

Joseph joyfully pocketed his precious denunciations, and continued:

"Your Eminence speaks of trying men who are still armed and on horseback."

"They are not all so. Read this letter from Monsieur to Chavigny. He asks for pardon. He dared not address me the first day, and his prayers rose no higher than the knees of one of my servants.*

"But the next day he took courage, and sent this to myself,† and the third to the King. His project choked

* *To M. de Chavigny.*

M. DE CHAVIGNY: Although I believe that you are little satisfied with me (and in truth you have reason to be dissatisfied), I do not the less entreat you to endeavor my reconciliation with his Eminence, and rely for this upon the true love you bear me, and which, I believe, is greater than your anger. You know how much I require to be relieved from the danger I am in. You have already twice stood my friend with his Eminence. I swear to you this shall be the last time I give you such an employment.

GASTON D'ORLÉANS.

† *To his Excellency the Cardinal-Duc.*

MY COUSIN: This ungrateful M. le Grand is the most guilty man in the world to have displeased you. The favors he received from his Majesty have always made me doubtful of him and his artifices. For you, my cousin, I retain my whole esteem. I am truly repentant at having again been wanting in the fidelity I owe to my Lord the King, and I call God to witness the sincerity with which I shall be for the rest of my life your most faithful friend, with the same devotion that I am, my cousin, your affectionate cousin,

GASTON.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

him; he could not keep it down. But I am not so easily satisfied. I must have a free and full confession, or I will expel him from the kingdom. I have written to him this morning.* As to the magnificent and powerful Duc de Bouillon, sovereign lord of Sedan and general-in-chief of the armies in Italy, he has just been arrested by his officers in the midst of his soldiers, concealed in a truss of straw. There remain, therefore, only our two young neighbors. They imagine they have the camp wholly at their orders, while they really have only the red troops. All the rest, being Monsieur's men, will not act, and my troops will arrest them. However, I have permitted them to appear to obey. If they give the signal at half-past eleven, they will be arrested at the first step. If not, the King will give them up to me this evening. Do not open your eyes so wide. He will give them up to me, I repeat, this night, between midnight and one o'clock. You see that all has been done without you, Joseph. We can dispense with you very well; and truly, all this time, I do not see that we have received any great service from you. You grow negligent."

"Ah, Monseigneur! did you but know the trouble I have had to discover the route of the bearers of the treaty! I only learned it by risking my life between these young people."

** The Cardinal's Answer.*

MONSIEUR: Since God wills that men should have recourse to a frank and entire confession to be absolved of their faults in this world, I indicate to you the steps you must take to be delivered from this danger. Your Highness has commenced well; you must continue. This is all I can say to you.

CINQ-MARS

The Cardinal laughed contemptuously, leaning back in his chair.

“Thou must have been very ridiculous and very fearful in that box, Joseph; I dare say it was the first time in thy life thou ever heardest love spoken of. Dost thou like the language, Father Joseph? Tell me, dost thou clearly understand it? I doubt whether thou hast formed a very refined idea of it.”

Richelieu, his arms crossed, looked at his discomfited Capuchin with infinite delight, and continued in the scornfully familiar tone of a grand seigneur, which he sometimes assumed, pleasing himself with putting forth the noblest expressions through the most impure lips:

“Come, now, Joseph, give me a definition of love according to thy idea. What can it be—for thou seest it exists out of romances. This worthy youngster undertook these little conspiracies through love. Thou heardest it thyself with thine unworthy ears. Come, what is love? For my part, I know nothing about it.”

The monk was astounded, and looked upon the ground with the stupid eye of some base animal. After long consideration, he replied in a drawling and nasal voice:

“It must be a kind of malignant fever which leads the brain astray; but in truth, Monseigneur, I have never reflected on it until this moment. I have always been embarrassed in speaking to a woman. I wish women could be omitted from society altogether; for I do not see what use they are, unless it be to disclose secrets, like the little Duchess or Marion de Lorme, whom I can not too strongly recommend to your Emi-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

nence. She thought of everything, and herself threw our little prophecy among the conspirators with great address. We have not been without the *marvellous* this time. As in the siege of Hesdin, all we have to do is to find *a window through which you may pass on the day of the execution.*”*

“This is another of your absurdities, sir,” said the Cardinal; “you will make me as ridiculous as yourself, if you go on so; I am too powerful to need the assistance of Heaven. Do not let that happen again. Occupy yourself **only** with the people I consign to you. I traced your part before. When the master of the horse is taken, you will see him tried and executed at Lyons. I will not be known in this. This affair is beneath me; it is a stone under my feet, upon which I ought not to have bestowed so much attention.”

Joseph was silent; he could not understand this man, who, surrounded on every side by armed enemies, spoke of the future as of a present over which he had the entire control, and of the present as a past which he no longer feared. He knew not whether to look upon him as a madman or a prophet, above or below the standard of human nature.

His astonishment was redoubled when Chavigny hastily entered, and nearly falling, in his heavy boots, over the Cardinal’s footstool, exclaimed in great agitation:

* In 1638, Prince Thomas having raised the siege of Hesdin, the Cardinal was much vexed at it. A nun of the convent of Mount Calvary had said that the victory would be to the King and Father Joseph, thus wishing it to be believed that Heaven protected the minister.—*Mémoires pour l’histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu.*

CINQ-MARS

“Sir, one of your servants has just arrived from Perpignan; and he has beheld the camp in an uproar, and your enemies in the saddle.”

“They will soon dismount, sir,” replied Richelieu, replacing his footstool. “You appear to have lost your equanimity.”

“But—but, Monseigneur, must we not warn Monsieur de Fabert?”

“Let him sleep, and go to bed yourself; and you also, Joseph.”

“Monseigneur, another strange event has occurred—the King has arrived.”

“Indeed, that is extraordinary,” said the minister, looking at his watch. “I did not expect him these two hours. Retire, both of you.”

A heavy trampling and the clattering of arms announced the arrival of the Prince; the folding-doors were thrown open; the guards in the Cardinal’s service struck the ground thrice with their pikes; and the King appeared.

He entered, supporting himself with a cane on one side, and on the other leaning upon the shoulder of his confessor, Father Sirmond, who withdrew, and left him with the Cardinal; the latter rose with difficulty, but could not advance a step to meet the King, because his legs were bandaged and enveloped. He made a sign that they should assist the King to a seat near the fire, facing himself. Louis XIII fell into an armchair furnished with pillows, asked for and drank a glass of cordial, prepared to strengthen him against the frequent fainting-fits caused by his malady of languor, signed to

ALFRED DE VIGNY

all to leave the room, and, alone with Richelieu, he said in a languid voice:

"I am departing, my dear Cardinal; I feel that I shall soon return to God. I become weaker from day to day; neither the summer nor the southern air has restored my strength."

"I shall precede your Majesty," replied the minister. "You see that death has already conquered my limbs; but while I have a head to think and a hand to write, I shall be at the service of your Majesty."

"And I am sure it was your intention to add, 'a heart to love me.'"

"Can your Majesty doubt it?" answered the Cardinal, frowning, and biting his lips impatiently at this speech.

"Sometimes I doubt it," replied the King. "Listen: I wish to speak openly to you, and to complain of you to yourself. There are two things which have been upon my conscience these three years. I have never mentioned them to you; but I reproached you secretly; and could anything have induced me to consent to any proposals contrary to your interest, it would be this recollection."

There was in this speech that frankness natural to weak minds, who seek by thus making their ruler uneasy, to compensate for the harm they dare not do him, and revenge their subjection by a childish controversy.

Richelieu perceived by these words that he had run a great risk; but he saw at the same time the necessity of venting all his spleen, and, to facilitate the explosion of these important avowals, he accumulated all the professions he thought most calculated to provoke the King.

CINQ-MARS

“No, no!” his Majesty at length exclaimed, “I shall believe nothing until you have explained those two things, which are always in my thoughts, which were lately mentioned to me, and which I can justify by no reasoning. I mean the trial of Urbain Grandier, of which I was never well informed, and the reason for the hatred you bore to my unfortunate mother, even to her very ashes.”

“Is this all, Sire?” said Richelieu. “Are these my only faults? They are easily explained. The first it was necessary to conceal from your Majesty because of its horrible and disgusting details of scandal. There was certainly an art employed, which can not be looked upon as guilty, in concealing, under the title of ‘magic,’ crimes the very names of which are revolting to modesty, the recital of which would have revealed dangerous mysteries to the innocent; this was a holy deceit practised to hide these impurities from the eyes of the people.”

“Enough, enough, Cardinal,” said Louis XIII, turning away his head, and looking downward, while a blush covered his face; “I can not hear more. I understand you; these explanations would disgust me. I approve your motives; ’tis well. I had not been told that; they had concealed these dreadful vices from me. Are you assured of the proofs of these crimes?”

“I have them all in my possession, Sire; and as to the glorious Queen, Marie de Médicis, I am surprised that your Majesty can forget how much I was attached to her. Yes, I do not fear to acknowledge it; it is to her I owe my elevation. She was the first who deigned to

ALFRED DE VIGNY

notice the Bishop of Luçon, then only twenty-two years of age, to place me near her. What have I not suffered when she compelled me to oppose her in your Majesty's interest! But this sacrifice was made for you. I never had, and never shall have, to regret it."

"'Tis well for you, but for me!" said the King, bitterly.

"Ah, Sire," exclaimed the Cardinal, "did not the Son of God himself set you an example? It is by the model of every perfection that we regulate our counsels; and if the monument due to the precious remains of your mother is not yet raised, Heaven is my witness that the works were retarded through the fear of afflicting your heart by bringing back the recollection of her death. But blessed be the day in which I have been permitted to speak to you on the subject! I myself shall say the first mass at Saint-Denis, when we shall see her deposited there, if Providence allows me the strength."

The countenance of the King assumed a more affable yet still cold expression; and the Cardinal, thinking that he could go no farther that evening in persuasion, suddenly resolved to make a more powerful move, and to attack the enemy in front. Still keeping his eyes firmly fixed upon the King, he said, coldly:

"And was it for this you consented to my death?"

"Me!" said the King. "You have been deceived; I have indeed heard of a conspiracy, and I wished to speak to you about it; but I have commanded nothing against you."

"The conspirators do not say so, Sire; but I am

CINQ-MARS

bound to believe your Majesty, and I am glad for your sake that men were deceived. But what advice were you about to condescend to give me?"

"I—I wished to tell you frankly, and between ourselves, that you will do well to beware of Monsieur——"

"Ah, Sire, I can not now heed it; for here is a letter which he has just sent to me for you. He seems to have been guilty even toward your Majesty."

The King read in astonishment:

MONSEIGNEUR: I am much grieved at having once more failed in the fidelity which I owe to your Majesty. I humbly entreat you to allow me to ask a thousand pardons, with the assurances of my submission and repentance.

Your very humble servant, GASTON.

"What does this mean?" cried Louis; "dare they arm against me also?"

"*Also!*" muttered the Cardinal, biting his lips; "yes, Sire, also; and this makes me believe, to a certain degree, this little packet of papers."

While speaking, he drew a roll of parchment from a piece of hollowed elder, and opened it before the eyes of the King.

"This is simply a treaty with Spain, which I think does not bear the signature of your Majesty. You may see the twenty articles all in due form. Everything is here arranged—the place of safety, the number of troops, the supplies of men and money."

"The traitors!" cried the King, in great agitation; "they must be seized. My brother renounces them and repents; but do not fail to arrest the Duc de Bouillon."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"It shall be done, Sire."

"That will be difficult, in the middle of the army in Italy."

"I will answer with my head for his arrest, Sire; but is there not another name to be added?"

"Who—what—Cinq-Mars?" inquired the King, hesitating.

"Exactly so, Sire," answered the Cardinal.

"I see—but—I think—we might——"

"Hear me!" exclaimed Richelieu, in a voice of thunder; "all must be settled to-day. Your favorite is mounted at the head of his party; choose between him and me. Yield up the boy to the man, or the man to the boy; there is no alternative."

"And what will you do if I consent?" said the King.

"I will have his head and that of his friend."

"Never! it is impossible!" replied the King, with horror, as he relapsed into the same state of irresolution he evinced when with Cinq-Mars against Richelieu. "He is my friend as well as you; my heart bleeds at the idea of his death. Why can you not both agree? Why this division? It is that which has led him to this. You have between you brought me to the brink of despair; you have made me the most miserable of men."

Louis hid his head in his hands while speaking, and perhaps he shed tears; but the inflexible minister kept his eyes upon him as if watching his prey, and without remorse, without giving the King time for reflection—on the contrary, profiting by this emotion to speak yet longer.

CINQ-MARS

“And is it thus,” he continued, in a harsh and cold voice, “that you remember the commandments of God communicated to you by the mouth of your confessor? You told me one day that the Church expressly commanded you to reveal to your prime minister all that you might hear against him; yet I have never heard from you of my intended death! It was necessary that more faithful friends should apprise me of this conspiracy; that the guilty themselves through the mercy of Providence should themselves make the avowal of their fault. One only, the most guilty, yet the least of all, still resists, and it is he who has conducted the whole; it is he who would deliver France into the power of the foreigner, who would overthrow in one single day my labors of twenty years. He would call up the Huguenots of the south, invite to arms all orders of the State, revive crushed pretensions, and, in fact, renew the League which was put down by your father. It is that—do not deceive yourself—it is that which raises so many heads against you. Are you prepared for the combat? If so, where are your arms?”

The King, quite overwhelmed, made no reply; he still covered his face with his hands. The stony-hearted Cardinal crossed his arms and continued:

“I fear that you imagine it is for myself I speak. Do you really think that I do not know my own powers, and that I fear such an adversary? Really, I know not what prevents me from letting you act for yourself—from transferring the immense burden of State affairs to the shoulders of this youth. You may imagine that during the twenty years I have been acquainted with

ALFRED DE VIGNY

your court, I have not forgotten to assure myself a retreat where, in spite of you, I could now go to live the six months which perhaps remain to me of life. It would be a curious employment for me to watch the progress of such a reign. What answer would you return, for instance, when all the inferior potentates, regaining their station, no longer kept in subjection by me, shall come in your brother's name to say to you, as they dared to say to Henri IV on his throne: 'Divide with us all the hereditary governments and sovereignties, and we shall be content.'* You will doubtless accede to their request; and it is the least you can do for those who will have delivered you from Richelieu. It will, perhaps, be fortunate, for to govern the Ile-de-France, which they will no doubt allow you as the original domain, your new minister will not require many secretaries."

While speaking thus, he furiously pushed the huge table, which nearly filled the room, and was laden with papers and numerous portfolios.

Louis was aroused from his apathetic meditation by the excessive audacity of this discourse. He raised his head, and seemed to have instantly formed one resolution for fear he should adopt another.

"Well, sir," said he, "my answer is that I will reign alone."

"Be it so!" replied Richelieu. "But I ought to give you notice that affairs are at present somewhat complicated. This is the hour when I generally commence my ordinary avocations."

* Mémoires de Sully, 1595.

CINQ-MARS

“I will act in your place,” said Louis. “I will open the portfolios and issue my commands.”

“Try, then,” said Richelieu. “I shall retire; and if anything causes you to hesitate, you can send for me.”

He rang a bell. In the same instant, and as if they had awaited the signal, four vigorous footmen entered, and carried him and his chair into another apartment, for we have before remarked that he was unable to walk. While passing through the chambers where the secretaries were at work, he called out in a loud voice:

“You will receive his Majesty’s commands.”

The King remained alone, strong in his new resolution, and, proud in having once resisted, he became anxious immediately to plunge into political business. He walked around the immense table, and beheld as many portfolios as they then counted empires, kingdoms, and States in Europe. He opened one and found it divided into sections equalling in number the subdivisions of the country to which it related. All was in order, but in alarming order for him, because each note only referred to the very essence of the business it alluded to, and related only to the exact point of its then relations with France. These laconic notes proved as enigmatic to Louis, as did the letters in cipher which covered the table. Here all was confusion. An edict of banishment and expropriation of the Huguenots of La Rochelle was mingled with treaties with Gustavus Adolphus and the Huguenots of the north against the empire. Notes on General Bannier and Wallenstein, the Duc de Weimar, and Jean de Witt were mingled

ALFRED DE VIGNY

with extracts from letters taken from the casket of the Queen, the list of the necklaces and jewels they contained, and the double interpretation which might be put upon every phrase of her notes. Upon the margin of one of these letters was written: "For four lines in a man's handwriting he might be criminally tried." Farther on were scattered denunciations against the Huguenots; the republican plans they had drawn up; the division of France into departments under the annual dictatorship of a chief. The seal of this projected State was affixed to it, representing an angel leaning upon a cross, and holding in his hand a Bible, which he raised to his forehead. By the side was a document which contained a list of those cardinals the pope had selected the same day as the Bishop of Luçon (Riche-lieu). Among them was to be found the Marquis de Bédemar, ambassador and conspirator at Venice.

Louis XIII exhausted his powers in vain over the details of another period, seeking unsuccessfully for any documents which might allude to the present conspiracy, to enable him to perceive its true meaning, and all that had been attempted against him, when a diminutive man, of an olive complexion, who stooped much, entered the cabinet with a measured step. This was a Secretary of State named Desnoyers. He advanced, bowing.

"May I be permitted to address your Majesty on the affairs of Portugal?" said he.

"And consequently of Spain?" said Louis. "Portugal is a province of Spain."

"Of Portugal," reiterated Desnoyers. "Here is the

CINQ-MARS

manifesto we have this moment received.” And he read, “Don John, by the grace of God, King of Portugal and of Algarves, kingdoms on this side of Africa, lord over Guinea, by conquest, navigation, and trade with Arabia, Persia, and the Indies——”

“What is all that?” said the King. “Who talks in this manner?”

“The Duke of Braganza, King of Portugal, crowned already some time by a man whom they call Pinto. Scarcely has he ascended the throne than he offers assistance to the revolted Catalonians.”

“Has Catalonia also revolted? The King, Philip IV, no longer has the Count-Duke for his Prime-Minister?”

“Just the contrary, Sire. It is on this very account. Here is the declaration of the States-General of Catalonia to his Catholic Majesty, signifying that the whole country will take up arms against his *sacrilegious* and *excommunicated* troops. The King of Portugal——”

“Say the Duke of Braganza!” replied Louis. “I recognize no rebels.”

“The Duke of Braganza, then,” coldly repeated the Secretary of State, “sends his nephew, Don Ignácio de Mascarenas, to the principality of Catalonia, to seize the protection (and it may be the sovereignty) of that country, which he would add to that he has just reconquered. Your Majesty’s troops are before Perpignan——”

“Well, and what of that?” said Louis.

“The Catalonians are more disposed toward France than toward Portugal, and there is still time to deprive

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the King of—the Duke of Portugal, I should say—of this protectorship.”

“What! I assist rebels! You dare——”

“Such was the intention of his Eminence,” continued the Secretary of State. “Spain and France are nearly at open war, and Monsieur d’Olivarès has not hesitated to offer the assistance of his Catholic Majesty to the Huguenots.”

“Very good. I will consider it,” said the King. “Leave me.”

“Sire, the States-General of Catalonia are in a dilemma. The troops from Aragon march against them.”

“We shall see. I will come to a decision in a quarter of an hour,” answered Louis XIII.

The little Secretary of State left the apartment discontented and discouraged. In his place Chavigny immediately appeared, holding a portfolio, on which were emblazoned the arms of England. “Sire,” said he, “I have to request your Majesty’s commands upon the affairs of England. The Parliamentarians, commanded by the Earl of Essex, have raised the siege of Gloucester. Prince Rupert has at Newbury fought a disastrous battle, and of little profit to his Britannic Majesty. The Parliament is prolonged. All the principal cities take part with it, together with all the sea-ports and the Presbyterian population. King Charles I implores assistance, which the Queen can no longer obtain from Holland.”

“Troops must be sent to my brother of England,” said Louis; but he wanted to look over the preceding papers, and casting his eyes over the notes of the Car-

CINQ-MARS

dinal, he found that under a former request of the King of England he had written with his own hand:

“We must consider some time and wait. The Commons are strong. King Charles reckons upon the Scots; they will sell him.

“We must be cautious. A warlike man has been over to see Vincennes, and he has said that ‘princes ought never to be struck, except on the head.’”

The Cardinal had added “remarkable,” but he had erased this word and substituted “formidable.” Again, beneath:

“This man rules Fairfax. He plays an inspired part. He will be a great man—assistance refused—money lost.”

The King then said, “No, no! do nothing hastily. I shall wait.”

“But, Sire,” said Chavigny, “events pass rapidly. If the courier be delayed, the King’s destruction may happen a year sooner.”

“Have they advanced so far?” asked Louis.

“In the camp of the Independents they preach up the republic with the Bible in their hands. In that of the Royalists, they dispute for precedency, and amuse themselves.”

“But one turn of good fortune may save everything?”

“The Stuarts are not fortunate, Sire,” answered Chavigny, respectfully, but in a tone which left ample room for consideration.

“Leave me,” said the King, with some displeasure.

The State-Secretary slowly retired.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

It was then that Louis XIII beheld himself as he really was, and was terrified at the nothingness he found in himself. He at first stared at the mass of papers which surrounded him, passing from one to the other, finding dangers on every side, and finding them still greater with the remedies he invented. He rose; and changing his place, he bent over, or rather threw himself upon, a geographical map of Europe. There he found all his fears concentrated. In the north, the south, the very centre of the kingdom, revolutions appeared to him like so many Eumenides. In every country he thought he saw a volcano ready to burst forth. He imagined he heard cries of distress from kings, who appealed to him for help, and the furious shouts of the populace. He fancied he felt the territory of France trembling and crumbling beneath his feet. His feeble and fatigued sight failed him. His weak head was attacked by vertigo, which threw all his blood back upon his heart.

“Richelieu!” he cried, in a stifled voice, while he rang a bell; “summon the Cardinal immediately.”

And he swooned in an armchair.

When the King opened his eyes, revived by salts and potent essences which had been applied to his lips and temples, he for one instant beheld himself surrounded by pages, who withdrew as soon as he opened his eyes, and he was once more left alone with the Cardinal. The impassible minister had had his chair placed by that of the King, as a physician would seat himself by the bedside of his patient, and fixed his sparkling and scrutinizing eyes upon the pale countenance of Louis. As

CINQ-MARS

soon as his victim could hear him, he renewed his fearful discourse in a hollow voice:

“You have recalled me. What would you with me?”

Louis, who was reclining on the pillow, half opened his eyes, fixed them upon Richelieu, and hastily closed them again. That bony head, armed with two flaming eyes, and terminating in a pointed and grizzly beard, the cap and vestments of the color of blood and flames,—all appeared to him like an infernal spirit.

“You must reign,” he said, in a languid voice.

“But will you give me up Cinq-Mars and De Thou?” again urged the implacable minister, bending forward to read in the dull eyes of the Prince, as an avaricious heir follows up, even to the tomb, the last glimpses of the will of a dying relative.

“You must reign,” repeated the King, turning away his head.

“Sign then,” said Richelieu; “the contents of this are, ‘This is my command—to take them, dead or alive.’”

Louis, whose head still reclined on the raised back of the chair, suffered his hand to fall upon the fatal paper, and signed it. “For pity’s sake, leave me; I am dying!” he said.

“That is not yet all,” continued he whom men call the great politician. “I place no reliance on you; I must first have some guarantee and assurance. Sign this paper, and I will leave you:

“When the King shall go to visit the Cardinal, the guards of the latter shall remain under arms; and when the Cardinal shall visit the King, the guards of the Cardinal shall share the same post with those of his Majesty.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Again:

“His Majesty undertakes to place the two princes, his sons, in the Cardinal’s hands, as hostages of the good faith of his attachment.”*

“My children!” exclaimed Louis, raising his head, “dare you?”

“Would you rather that I should retire?” said Richelieu.

The King again signed.

“Is all finished now?” he inquired, with a deep sigh.

All was not finished; one other grief was still in reserve for him. The door was suddenly opened, and Cinq-Mars entered. It was the Cardinal who trembled now.

“What would you here, sir?” said he, seizing the bell to ring for assistance.

The master of the horse was as pale as the King, and without condescending to answer Richelieu, he advanced steadily toward Louis XIII, who looked at him with the air of a man who has just received a sentence of death.

“You would, Sire, find it difficult to have me arrested, for I have twenty thousand men under my command,” said Henri d’Effiat, in a sweet and subdued voice.

“Alas, Cinq-Mars!” replied the King, sadly; “is it thou who hast been guilty of these crimes?”

“Yes, Sire; and I also bring you my sword, for no doubt you came here to surrender me,” said he, unbuckling his sword, and laying it at the feet of the

* Mémoires d’Anne d’Autriche, 1642.

CINQ-MARS

King, who fixed his eyes upon the floor without making any reply.

Cinq-Mars smiled sadly, but not bitterly, for he no longer belonged to this earth. Then, looking contemptuously at Richelieu, "I surrender because I wish to die, but I am not conquered."

The Cardinal clenched his fist with passion; but he restrained his fury. "Who are your accomplices?" he demanded. Cinq-Mars looked steadfastly at Louis, and half opened his lips to speak. The King bent down his head, and felt at that moment a torture unknown to all other men.

"I have none," said Cinq-Mars, pitying the King; and he slowly left the apartment. He stopped in the first gallery. Fabert and all the gentlemen rose on seeing him. He walked up to the commander, and said:

"Sir, order these gentlemen to arrest me!"

They looked at each other, without daring to approach him.

"Yes, sir, I am your prisoner; yes, gentlemen, I am without my sword, and I repeat to you that I am the King's prisoner."

"I do not understand what I see," said the General; "there are two of you who surrender, and I have no instruction to arrest any one."

"Two!" said Cinq-Mars; "the other is doubtless De Thou. Alas! I recognize him by this devotion."

"And had I not also guessed your intention?" exclaimed the latter, coming forward, and throwing himself into his arms.

CHAPTER XXV

THE PRISONERS

J'ai trouvé dans mon cœur le dessein de mon frère.

PICHALD, *Léonidas*.

Mourir! sans vider mon carquois!

Sans percer, sans fouler, sans pétrir dans leur fange

Ces bourreaux barbouilleurs de lois!

ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.



AMONG those old châteaux of which France is every year deprived regretfully, as of flowers from her crown, there was one of a grim and savage appearance upon the left bank of the Saône. It looked like a formidable sentinel placed at one of the gates of Lyons, and derived its name from an enormous rock, known as Pierre-Encise, which terminates in a peak—a sort of natural pyramid, the summit of which overhanging the river in former times, they say, joined the rocks which may still be seen on the opposite bank, forming the natural arch of a bridge; but time, the waters, and the hand of man have left nothing standing but the ancient mass of granite which formed the pedestal of the now destroyed fortress.

The archbishops of Lyons, as the temporal lords

CINQ-MARS

of the city, had built and formerly resided in this castle. It afterward became a fortress, and during the reign of Louis XIII a State prison. One colossal tower, where the daylight could only penetrate through three long loopholes, commanded the edifice, and some irregular buildings surrounded it with their massive walls, whose lines and angles followed the form of the immense and perpendicular rock.

It was here that the Cardinal, jealous of his prey, determined to imprison his young enemies, and to conduct them himself.

Allowing Louis to precede him to Paris, he removed his captives from Narbonne, dragging them in his train to ornament his last triumph, and embarking on the Rhone at Tarascon, nearly at the mouth of the river, as if to prolong the pleasure of revenge which men have dared to call that of the gods, displayed to the eyes of the spectators on both sides of the river the luxury of his hatred; he slowly proceeded on his course up the river in barges with gilded oars and emblazoned with his armorial bearings, reclining in the first and followed by his two victims in the second, which was fastened to his own by a long chain.

Often in the evening, when the heat of the day was passed, the awnings of the two boats were removed, and in the one Richelieu might be seen, pale, and seated in the stern; in that which followed, the two young prisoners, calm and collected, supported each other, watching the passage of the rapid stream. Formerly the soldiers of Cæsar, who encamped on the same shores, would have thought they beheld the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

inflexible boatman of the infernal regions conducting the friendly shades of Castor and Pollux. Christians dared not even reflect, or see a priest leading his two enemies to the scaffold; it was the first minister who passed.

Thus he went on his way until he left his victims under guard at the identical city in which the late conspirators had doomed him to perish. Thus he loved to defy Fate herself, and to plant a trophy on the very spot which had been selected for his tomb.

"He was borne," says an ancient manuscript journal of this year, "along the river Rhone in a boat in which a wooden chamber had been constructed, lined with crimson fluted velvet, the flooring of which was of gold. The same boat contained an antechamber decorated in the same manner. The prow and stern of the boat were occupied by soldiers and guards, wearing scarlet coats embroidered with gold, silver, and silk; and many lords of note. His Eminence occupied a bed hung with purple taffetas. Monseigneur the Cardinal Bigni, and Messeigneurs the Bishops of Nantes and Chartres, were there, with many abbés and gentlemen in other boats. Preceding his vessel, a boat sounded the passages, and another boat followed, filled with arquebusiers and officers to command them. When they approached any isle, they sent soldiers to inspect it, to discover whether it was occupied by any suspicious persons; and, not meeting any, they guarded the shore until two boats which followed had passed. They were filled with the nobility and well-armed soldiers.

"Afterward came the boat of his Eminence, to the stern of which was attached a little boat, which conveyed MM. de Thou and Cinq-Mars, guarded by an officer of the King's guard and twelve guards from the regiment of his Eminence. Three vessels, containing the clothes and plate of his Eminence, with several gentlemen and soldiers, followed the boats.

"Two companies of light-horsemen followed the banks of the

CINQ-MARS

Rhône in Dauphiné, and as many on the Languedoc and Vivarais side, and a noble regiment of foot, who preceded his Eminence in the towns which he was to enter, or in which he was to sleep. It was pleasant to listen to the trumpets, which, played in Dauphiné, were answered by those in Vivarais, and repeated by the echoes of our rocks. It seemed as if all were trying which could play best.”*

In the middle of a night of the month of September, while everything appeared to slumber in the impregnable tower which contained the prisoners, the door of their outer chamber turned noiselessly on its hinges, and a man appeared on the threshold, clad in a brown robe confined round his waist by a cord. His feet were encased in sandals, and his hand grasped a large bunch of keys; it was Joseph. He looked cautiously round without advancing, and contemplated in silence the apartment occupied by the master of the horse. Thick carpets covered the floor, and large and splendid hangings concealed the walls of the prison; a bed hung with red damask was prepared, but it was unoccupied. Seated near a high chimney in a large armchair, attired in a long gray robe, similar in form to that of a priest, his head bent down, and his eyes fixed upon a little cross of gold by the flickering light of a lamp, he was absorbed in so deep a meditation that the Capuchin had leisure to approach him closely, and confront the prisoner before he perceived him. Suddenly, however, Cinq-Mars raised his head and exclaimed, “Wretch, what do you here?”

“Young man, you are violent,” answered the mys-

* See Notes.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

terious intruder, in a low voice. "Two months' imprisonment ought to have been enough to calm you. I come to tell you things of great importance. Listen to me! I have thought much of you; and I do not hate you so much as you imagine. The moments are precious. I will tell you all in a few words: in two hours you will be interrogated, tried, and condemned to death with your friend. It can not be otherwise, for all will be finished the same day."

"I know it," answered Cinq-Mars; "and I am prepared."

"Well, then, I can still release you from this affair. I have reflected deeply, as I told you; and I am here to make a proposal which can but give you satisfaction. The Cardinal has but six months to live. Let us not be mysterious; we must speak openly. You see where I have brought you to serve him; and you can judge by that the point to which I would conduct him to serve you. If you wish it, we can cut short the six months of his life which still remain. The King loves you, and will recall you with joy when he finds you still live. You may long live, and be powerful and happy, if you will protect me, and make me cardinal."

Astonishment deprived the young prisoner of speech. He could not understand such language, and seemed to be unable to descend to it from his higher meditations. All that he could say was:

"Your benefactor, Richelieu?"

The Capuchin smiled, and, drawing nearer, continued in an undertone:

CINQ-MARS

"Policy admits of no benefits; it contains nothing but interest. A man employed by a minister is no more bound to be grateful than a horse whose rider prefers him to others. My pace has been convenient to him; so much the better. Now it is my interest to throw him from the saddle. Yes, this man loves none but himself. I now see that he has deceived me by continually retarding my elevation; but once again, I possess the sure means for your escape in silence. I am the master here. I will remove the men in whom he trusts, and replace them by others whom he has condemned to die, and who are near at hand confined in the northern tower—the Tour des Oubliettes, which overhangs the river. His creatures will occupy their places. I will recommend a physician—an empyric who is devoted to me—to the illustrious Cardinal, who has been given over by the most scientific in Paris. If you will unite with me, he shall convey to him a universal and eternal remedy."

"Away!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars. "Leave me, thou infernal monk! No, thou art like no other man! Thou glidest with a noiseless and furtive step through the darkness; thou traversest the walls to preside at secret crimes; thou placest thyself between the hearts of lovers to separate them eternally. Who art thou? Thou resemblest a tormented spirit of the damned!"

"Romantic boy!" answered Joseph; "you would have possessed high attainments had it not been for your false notions. There is perhaps neither damnation nor soul. If the dead returned to complain

ALFRED DE VIGNY

of their fate, I should have a thousand around me; and I have never seen any, even in my dreams."

"Monster!" muttered Cinq-Mars.

"Words again!" said Joseph; "there is neither monster nor virtuous man. You and De Thou, who pride yourselves on what you call virtue—you have failed in causing the death of perhaps a hundred thousand men—at once and in the broad daylight—for no end, while Richelieu and I have caused the death of far fewer, one by one, and by night, to found a great power. Would you remain pure and virtuous, you must not interfere with other men; or, rather, it is more reasonable to see that which is, and to say with me, it is possible that there is no such thing as a soul. We are the sons of chance; but relative to other men, we have passions which we must satisfy."

"I breathe again!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars; "he believes not in God!"

Joseph continued:

"Richelieu, you, and I were born ambitious; it followed, then, that everything must be sacrificed to this idea."

"Wretched man, do not compare me to thyself!"

"It is the plain truth, nevertheless," replied the Capuchin; "only you now see that our system was better than yours."

"Miserable wretch, it was for love——"

"No, no! it was not that; here are mere words again. You have perhaps imagined it was so; but it was for your own advancement. I have heard you speak to the young girl. You thought but of your-

CINQ-MARS

selves; you do not love each other. She thought but of her rank, and you of your ambition. One loves in order to hear one's self called perfect, and to be adored; it is still the same egoism."

"Cruel serpent!" cried Cinq-Mars; "is it not enough that thou hast caused our deaths? Why dost thou come here to cast thy venom upon the life thou hast taken from us? What demon has suggested to thee thy horrible analysis of hearts?"

"Hatred of everything which is superior to myself," replied Joseph, with a low and hollow laugh, "and the desire to crush those I hate under my feet, have made me ambitious and ingenious in finding the weakness of your dreams."

"Just Heaven, dost thou hear him?" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, rising and extending his arms upward.

The solitude of his prison; the pious conversations of his friend; and, above all, the presence of death, which, like the light of an unknown star, paints in other colors the objects we are accustomed to see; meditations on eternity; and (shall we say it?) the great efforts he had made to change his heartrending regrets into immortal hopes, and to direct to God all that power of love which had led him astray upon earth—all this combined had worked a strange revolution in him; and like those ears of corn which ripen suddenly on receiving one ray from the sun, his soul had acquired light, exalted by the mysterious influence of death.

"Just Heaven!" he repeated, "if this wretch and his master are human, can I also be a man? Behold,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

O God, behold two distinct ambitions—the one egoistical and bloody, the other devoted and unstained; theirs roused by hatred, and ours inspired by love. Look down, O Lord, judge, and pardon! Pardon, for we have greatly erred in walking but for a single day in the same paths which, on earth, possess but one name to whatever end it may tend!”

Joseph interrupted him harshly, stamping his foot on the ground:

“When you have finished your prayer,” said he, “you will perhaps inform me whether you will assist me; and I will instantly——”

“Never, impure wretch, never!” said Henri d’Effiat. “I will never unite with you in an assassination. I refused to do so when powerful, and upon yourself.”

“You were wrong; you would have been master now.”

“And what happiness should I find in my power when shared as it must be by a woman who does not understand me; who loved me feebly, and prefers a crown?”

“Inconceivable folly!” said the Capuchin, laughing.

“All with her; nothing without her—that was my desire.”

“It is from obstinacy and vanity that you persist; it is impossible,” replied Joseph. “It is not in nature.”

“Thou who wouldst deny the spirit of self-sacrifice,” answered Cinq-Mars; “dost thou understand that of my friend?”

“It does not exist; he follows you because——”

CINQ-MARS

Here the Capuchin, slightly embarrassed, reflected an instant.

“Because—because—he has formed you; you are his work; he is attached to you by the self-love of an author. He was accustomed to lecture you; and he felt that he should not find another pupil so docile to listen to and applaud him. Constant habit has persuaded him that his life was bound to yours; it is something of that kind. He will accompany you mechanically. Besides, all is not yet finished; we shall see the end and the examination. He will certainly deny all knowledge of the conspiracy.”

“He will not deny it!” exclaimed Cinq-Mars, impetuously.

“He knew it, then? You confess it,” said Joseph, triumphantly; “you have not said as much before.”

“O Heaven, what have I done!” gasped Cinq-Mars, hiding his face.

“Calm yourself; he is saved, notwithstanding this avowal, if you accept my offer.”

D’Effiat remained silent for a short time.

The Capuchin continued:

“Save your friend. The King’s favor awaits you, and perhaps the love which has erred for a moment.”

“Man, or whatever else thou art, if thou hast in thee anything resembling a heart,” answered the prisoner, “save him! He is the purest of created beings; but convey him far away while yet he sleeps, for should he awake, thy endeavors would be vain.”

“What good will that do me?” said the Capuchin, laughing. “It is you and your favor that I want.”

ALFRED DE VIGNY

The impetuous Cinq-Mars rose, and, seizing Joseph by the arm, eyeing him with a terrible look, said:

"I degraded him in interceding with thee for him." He continued, raising the tapestry which separated his apartment from that of his friend, "Come, and doubt, if thou canst, devotion and the immortality of the soul. Compare the uneasiness and misery of thy triumph with the calmness of our defeat, the meanness of thy reign with the grandeur of our captivity, thy sanguinary vigils to the slumbers of the just."

A solitary lamp threw its light on De Thou. The young man was kneeling on a cushion, surmounted by a large ebony crucifix. He seemed to have fallen asleep while praying. His head, inclining backward, was still raised toward the cross. His pale lips wore a calm and divine smile.

"Holy Father, how he sleeps!" exclaimed the astonished Capuchin, thoughtlessly uniting to his frightful discourse the sacred name he every day pronounced. He suddenly retired some paces, as if dazzled by a heavenly vision.

"Nonsense, nonsense!" he said, shaking his head, and passing his hand rapidly over his face. "All this is childishness. It would overcome me if I reflected on it. These ideas may serve as opium to produce a calm. But that is not the question; say yes or no."

"No," said Cinq-Mars, pushing him to the door by the shoulder. "I will not accept life; and I do not regret having compromised De Thou, for he would

CINQ-MARS

not have bought his life at the price of an assassination. And when he yielded at Narbonne, it was not that he might escape at Lyons."

"Then wake him, for here come the judges," said the furious Capuchin, in a sharp, piercing voice.

Lighted by flambeaux, and preceded by a detachment of the Scotch guards, fourteen judges entered, wrapped in long robes, and whose features were not easily distinguished. They seated themselves in silence on the right and left of the huge chamber. They were the judges delegated by the Cardinal to judge this sad and solemn affair—all true men to the Cardinal Richelieu, and in his confidence, who from Tarascon had chosen and instructed them. He had the Chancellor Seguier brought to Lyons, *to avoid*, as he stated in the instructions he sent by Chavigny to the King Louis XIII—"to avoid all the delays which would take place if he were not present. M. de Marillac," he adds, "*was at Nantes for the trial of Chalais*, M. de Château-Neuf at Toulouse, superintending the death of M. de Montmorency, and M. de Bellière at Paris, conducting the trial of M. de Biron. The authority and intelligence of these gentlemen in forms of justice are indispensable."

The Chancellor arrived with all speed. But at this moment he was informed that he was not to appear, for fear that he might be influenced by the memory of his ancient friendship for the prisoner, whom he only saw *tête-à-tête*. The commissioners and himself had previously and rapidly received the cowardly depositions of the Duc d'Orléans, at Villefranche, in

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Beaujolais, and then at Vivey,* two miles from Lyons, where this wretched prince had received orders to go, begging forgiveness, and trembling, although surrounded by his followers, whom from very pity he had been allowed to retain, carefully watched, however, by the French and Swiss guards. The Cardinal had dictated to him his part and answers word for word; and in consideration of this docility, they had exempted him in form from the painful task of confronting MM. de Cinq-Mars and De Thou. The chancellor and commissioners had also prepared M. de Bouillon, and, strong with their preliminary work, they visited in all their strength the two young criminals whom they had determined not to save.

History has only handed down to us the names of the State counsellors who accompanied Pierre Segulier, but not those of the other commissioners, of whom it is only mentioned that there were six from the parliament of Grenoble, and two presidents. The counsellor, or reporter of the State, Laubardemont, who had directed them in all, was at their head. Joseph often whispered to them with the most studied politeness, glancing at Laubardemont with a ferocious sneer.

It was arranged that an armchair should serve as a bar; and all were silent in expectation of the prisoner's answer.

He spoke in a soft and clear voice:

“Say to Monsieur le Chancelier that I have the

* House which belonged to an Abbé d'Esnay, brother of M. de Villeroy, called Montrésor.

CINQ-MARS

right of appeal to the parliament of Paris, and to object to my judges, because two of them are my declared enemies, and at their head one of my friends, Monsieur de Seguier himself, whom I maintained in his charge.

"But I will spare you much trouble, gentlemen, by pleading guilty to the whole charge of conspiracy, arranged and conducted by myself alone. It is my wish to die. I have nothing to add for myself; but if you would be just, you will not harm the life of him whom the King has pronounced to be the most honest man in France, and who dies for my sake alone."

"Summon him," said Laubardemont.

Two guards entered the apartment of De Thou, and led him forth. He advanced, and bowed gravely, while an angelical smile played upon his lips. Embracing Cinq-Mars, "Here at last is our day of glory," said he. "We are about to gain heaven and eternal happiness."

"We understand," said Laubardemont, "we have been given to understand by Monsieur de Cinq-Mars himself, that you were acquainted with this conspiracy?"

De Thou answered instantly, and without hesitation. A half-smile was still on his lips, and his eyes cast down.

"Gentlemen, I have passed my life in studying human laws, and I know that the testimony of one accused person can not condemn another. I can also repeat what I said before, that I should not have been believed had I denounced the King's brother without

ALFRED DE VIGNY

proof. You perceive, then, that my life and death entirely rest with myself. I have, however, well weighed the one and the other. I have clearly foreseen that whatever life I may hereafter lead, it could not but be most unhappy after the loss of Monsieur de Cinq-Mars. I therefore acknowledge and confess that I was aware of his conspiracy. I did my utmost to prevent it, to deter him from it. He believed me to be his only and faithful friend, and I would not betray him. Therefore, I condemn myself by the very laws which were set forth by my father, who, I hope, forgives me."

At these words, the two friends precipitated themselves into each other's arms.

Cinq-Mars exclaimed:

"My friend, my friend, how bitterly I regret that I have caused your death! Twice I have betrayed you; but you shall know in what manner."

But De Thou, embracing and consoling his friend, answered, raising his eyes from the ground:

"Ah, happy are we to end our days in this manner! Humanly speaking, I might complain of you; but God knows how much I love you. What have we done to merit the grace of martyrdom, and the happiness of dying together?"

The judges were not prepared for this mildness, and looked at each other with surprise.

"If they would only give me a good partisan," muttered a hoarse voice (it was Grandchamp, who had crept into the room, and whose eyes were red with fury), "I would soon rid Monseigneur of all these

CINQ-MARS

black-looking fellows.” Two men with halberds immediately placed themselves silently at his side. He said no more, and to compose himself retired to a window which overlooked the river, whose tranquil waters the sun had not yet lighted with its beams, and appeared to pay no attention to what was passing in the room.

However, Laubardemont, fearing that the judges might be touched with compassion, said in a loud voice:

“In pursuance of the order of Monseigneur the Cardinal, these two men will be put to the rack; that is to say, to the ordinary and extraordinary question.”

Indignation forced Cinq-Mars again to assume his natural character; crossing his arms, he made two steps toward Laubardemont and Joseph, which alarmed them. The former involuntarily placed his hand to his forehead.

“Are we at Loudun?” exclaimed the prisoner; but De Thou, advancing, took his hand and held it. Cinq-Mars was silent, then continued in a calm voice, looking steadfastly at the judges:

“Messieurs, this measure appears to me rather harsh; a man of my age and rank ought not to be subjected to these formalities. I have confessed all, and I will confess it all again. I willingly and gladly accept death; it is not from souls like ours that secrets can be wrung by bodily suffering. We are prisoners by our own free will, and at the time chosen by us. We have confessed enough for you to condemn us to

ALFRED DE VIGNY

death; you shall know nothing more. We have obtained what we wanted."

"What are you doing, my friend?" interrupted De Thou. "He is mistaken, gentlemen, we do not refuse this martyrdom which God offers us; we demand it."

"But," said Cinq-Mars, "do you need such infamous tortures to obtain salvation—you who are already a martyr, a voluntary martyr to friendship? Gentlemen, it is I alone who possess important secrets; it is the chief of a conspiracy who knows all. Put me alone to the torture if we must be treated like the worst of malefactors."

"For the sake of charity," added De Thou, "deprive me not of equal suffering with my friend; I have not followed him so far, to abandon him at this dreadful moment, and not to use every effort to accompany him to heaven."

During this debate, another was going forward between Laubardemont and Joseph. The latter, fearing that torments would induce him to disclose the secret of his recent proposition, advised that they should not be resorted to; the other, not thinking his triumph complete by death alone, absolutely insisted on their being applied. The judges surrounded and listened to these secret agents of the Prime-Minister; however, many circumstances having caused them to suspect that the influence of the Capuchin was more powerful than that of the judge, they took part with him, and decided for mercy, when he finished by these words uttered in a low voice:

"I know their secrets. There is no necessity to

CINQ-MARS

force them from their lips, because they are useless, and relate to too high circumstances. Monsieur le Grand has no one to denounce but the King, and the other the Queen. It is better that we should remain ignorant. Besides, they will not confess. I know them; they will be silent—the one from pride, the other through piety. Let them alone. The torture will wound them; they will be disfigured and unable to walk. That will spoil the whole ceremony; they must be kept to appear.”

This last observation prevailed. The judges retired to deliberate with the chancellor. While departing, Joseph whispered to Laubardemont:

“I have provided you with enough pleasure here; you will still have that of deliberating, and then you shall go and examine three men who are confined in the northern tower.”

These were the three judges who had condemned Urbain Grandier.

As he spoke, he laughed heartily, and was the last to leave the room, pushing the astonished master of requests before him.

The sombre tribunal had scarcely disappeared when Grandchamp, relieved from his two guards, hastened toward his master, and, seizing his hand, said:

“In the name of Heaven, come to the terrace, Monseigneur! I have something to show you; in the name of your mother, come!”

But at that moment the chamber door was opened, and the old Abbé Quillet appeared.

“My children! my dear children!” exclaimed the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

old man, weeping bitterly. "Alas! why was I only permitted to enter to-day? Dear Henri, your mother, your brother, your sister, are concealed here."

"Be quiet, Monsieur l'Abbé!" said Grandchamp; "do come to the terrace, Monseigneur."

But the old priest still detained and embraced his pupil.

"We hope," said he; "we hope for mercy."

"I shall refuse it," said Cinq-Mars.

"We hope for nothing but the mercy of God," added De Thou.

"Silence!" said Grandchamp, "the judges are returning."

And the door opened again to admit the dismal procession, from which Joseph and Laubardemont were missing.

"Gentlemen," exclaimed the good Abbé, addressing the commissioners, "I am happy to tell you that I have just arrived from Paris, and that no one doubts but that all the conspirators will be pardoned. I have had an interview at her Majesty's apartments with Monsieur himself; and as to the Duc de Bouillon, his examination is not unfav——"

"Silence!" cried M. de Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scotch guards; and the commissioners entered and again arranged themselves in the apartment.

M. de Thou, hearing them summon the criminal recorder of the presidial of Lyons to pronounce the sentence, involuntarily launched out in one of those transports of religious joy which are never displayed but by the martyrs and saints at the approach of

CINQ-MARS

death; and, advancing toward this man, he exclaimed:

“Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona!”

Then, taking the hand of Cinq-Mars, he knelt down bareheaded to receive the sentence, as was the custom. D’Effiat remained standing; and they dared not compel him to kneel. The sentence was pronounced in these words:

“The Attorney-General, prosecutor on the part of the State, on a charge of high treason; and Messire Henri d’Effiat de Cinq-Mars, master of the horse, aged twenty-two, and François Auguste de Thou, aged thirty-five, of the King’s privy council, —prisoners in the château of Pierre-Encise, at Lyons, accused and defendants on the other part:

“Considered, the special trial commenced by the aforesaid attorney-general against the said D’Effiat and De Thou; informations, interrogations, confessions, denegations, and confrontations, and authenticated copies of the treaty with Spain, it is considered in the delegated chamber:

“(1) That he who conspires against the person of the ministers of princes is considered by the ancient laws and constitutions of the emperors to be guilty of high treason; (2) that the third ordinance of the King Louis XI renders any one liable to the punishment of death who does not reveal a conspiracy against the State.

“The commissioners deputed by his Majesty have declared the said D’Effiat and De Thou guilty and convicted of the crime of high treason:

“The said D’Effiat, for the conspiracies and enterprises, league, and treaties, formed by him with the foreigner against the State;

“And the said De Thou, for having a thorough knowledge of this conspiracy.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"In reparation of which crimes they have deprived them of all honors and dignities, and condemned them to be deprived of their heads on a scaffold, which is for this purpose erected in the Place des Terreaux, in this city.

"It is further declared that all and each of their possessions, real and personal, be confiscated to the King, and that those which they hold from the crown do pass immediately to it again —of the aforesaid goods, sixty thousand livres being devoted to pious uses."

After the sentence was pronounced, M. de Thou exclaimed in a loud voice:

"God be blessed! God be praised!"

"I have never feared death," said Cinq-Mars, coldly.

Then, according to the forms prescribed, M. Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scotch guards, an old man upward of sixty years of age, declared with emotion that he placed the prisoners in the hands of the Sieur Thomé, provost of the merchants of Lyons; he then took leave of them, followed by the whole of the body-guard, silently, and in tears.

"Weep not," said Cinq-Mars; "tears are useless. Rather pray for us; and be assured that I do not fear death."

He shook them by the hand, and De Thou embraced them; after which they left the apartment, their eyes filled with tears, and hiding their faces in their cloaks.

"Barbarians!" exclaimed the Abbé Quillet; "to find arms against them, one must search the whole arsenal of tyrants. Why did they admit me at this moment?"

CINQ-MARS

“As a confessor, Monsieur,” whispered one of the commissioners; “for no stranger has entered this place these two months.”

As soon as the huge gates of the prison were closed, and the outside gratings lowered, “To the terrace, in the name of Heaven!” again exclaimed Grandchamp. And he drew his master and De Thou thither.

The old preceptor followed them, weeping.

“What do you want with us in a moment like this?” said Cinq-Mars, with indulgent gravity.

“Look at the chains of the town,” said the faithful servant.

The rising sun had hardly tinged the sky. In the horizon a line of vivid yellow was visible, upon which the mountain’s rough blue outlines were boldly traced; the waves of the Saône, and the chains of the town hanging from one bank to the other, were still veiled by a light vapor, which also rose from Lyons and concealed the roofs of the houses from the eye of the spectator. The first tints of the morning light had as yet colored only the most elevated points of the magnificent landscape. In the city the steeples of the Hôtel de Ville and St. Nizier, and on the surrounding hills the monasteries of the Carmelites and Ste.-Marie, and the entire fortress of Pierre-Encise were gilded with the fires of the coming day. The joyful peals from the churches were heard, the peaceful matins from the convent and village bells. The walls of the prison were alone silent.

“Well,” said Cinq-Mars, “what are we to see—

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the beauty of the plains, the richness of the city, or the calm peacefulness of these villages? Ah, my friend, in every place there are to be found passions and griefs, like those which have brought us here."

The old Abbé and Grandchamp leaned over the parapet, watching the bank of the river.

"The fog is so thick, we can see nothing yet," said the Abbé.

"How slowly our last sun appears!" said De Thou.

"Do you not see low down there, at the foot of the rocks, on the opposite bank, a small white house, between the Halincourt gate and the Boulevard Saint Jean?" asked the Abbé.

"I see nothing," answered Cinq-Mars, "but a mass of dreary wall."

"Hark!" said the Abbé; "some one speaks near us!"

In fact, a confused, low, and inexplicable murmur was heard in a little turret, the back of which rested upon the platform of the terrace. As it was scarcely larger than a pigeon-house, the prisoners had not until now observed it.

"Are they already coming to fetch us?" said Cinq-Mars.

"Bah! bah!" answered Grandchamp, "do not make yourself uneasy; it is the Tour des Oubliettes. I have prowled round the fort for two months, and I have seen men fall from there into the water at least once a week. Let us think of our affair. I see a light down there."

An invincible curiosity, however, led the two pris-

CINQ-MARS

oners to look at the turret, in spite of the horror of their own situation. It advanced to the extremity of the rock, over a gulf of foaming green water of great depth. A wheel of a mill long deserted was seen turning with great rapidity. Three distinct sounds were now heard, like those of a drawbridge suddenly lowered and raised to its former position by a recoil or spring striking against the stone walls; and three times a black substance was seen to fall into the water with a splash.

"Mercy! can these be men?" exclaimed the Abbé, crossing himself.

"I thought I saw brown robes turning in the air," said Grandchamp; "they are the Cardinal's friends."

A horrible cry was heard from the tower, accompanied by an impious oath. The heavy trap groaned for the fourth time. The green water received with a loud noise a burden which cracked the enormous wheel of the mill; one of its large spokes was torn away, and a man entangled in its beams appeared above the foam, which he colored with his blood. He rose twice, and sank beneath the waters, shrieking violently; it was Laubardemont.

Cinq-Mars drew back in horror.

"There is a Providence," said Grandchamp; "Urban Grandier summoned him in three years. But come, come! the time is precious! Do not remain motionless. Be it he, I am not surprised, for those wretches devour each other. But let us endeavor to deprive them of their choicest morsel. *Vive Dieu!* I see the signal! We are saved! All is ready; run to

ALFRED DE VIGNY

this side, Monsieur l'Abbé! See the white handkerchief at the window! our friends are prepared."

The Abbé seized the hands of both his friends, and drew them to that side of the terrace toward which they had at first looked. "Listen to me, both of you," said he. "You must know that none of the conspirators has profited by the retreat you secured for them. They have all hastened to Lyons, disguised, and in great number; they have distributed sufficient gold in the city to secure them from being betrayed; they are resolved to make an attempt to deliver you. The time chosen is that when they are conducting you to the scaffold; the signal is your hat, which you will place on your head when they are to commence."

The worthy Abbé, half weeping, half smiling hopefully, related that upon the arrest of his pupil he had hastened to Paris; that such secrecy enveloped all the Cardinal's actions that none there knew the place in which the master of the horse was detained. Many said that he was banished; and when the reconciliation between Monsieur and the Duc de Bouillon and the King was known, men no longer doubted that the life of the other was assured, and ceased to speak of this affair, which, not having been executed, compromised few persons. They had even in some measure rejoiced in Paris to see the town of Sedan and its territory added to the kingdom in exchange for the letters of *abolition* granted to the Duke, acknowledged innocent in common with Monsieur; so that the result of all the arrangements had been to excite admiration of the Cardinal's ability, and of his clemency

CINQ-MARS

toward the conspirators, who, it was said, had contemplated his death. They even spread the report that he had facilitated the escape of Cinq-Mars and De Thou, occupying himself generously with their retreat to a foreign land, after having bravely caused them to be arrested in the midst of the camp of Perpignan.

At this part of the narrative, Cinq-Mars could not avoid forgetting his resignation, and clasping his friend's hand, "*Arrested!*" he exclaimed. "Must we renounce even the honor of having voluntarily surrendered ourselves? Must we sacrifice all, even the opinion of posterity?"

"There is vanity again," replied De Thou, placing his fingers on his lips. "But hush! let us hear the Abbé to the end."

The tutor, not doubting that the calmness which these two young men exhibited arose from the joy they felt in finding their escape assured, and seeing that the sun had hardly yet dispersed the morning mists, yielded himself without restraint to the involuntary pleasure which old men always feel in recounting new events, even though they afflict the hearers. He related all his fruitless endeavors to discover his pupil's retreat, unknown to the court and the town, where none, indeed, dared to pronounce the name of Cinq-Mars in the most secret asylums. He had only heard of the imprisonment at Pierre-Encise from the Queen herself, who had deigned to send for him, and charge him to inform the Maréchale d'Effiat and all the conspirators that they might make a desperate effort to

ALFRED DE VIGNY

deliver their young chief. Anne of Austria had even ventured to send many of the gentlemen of Auvergne and Touraine to Lyons to assist in their last attempt.

"The good Queen!" said he; "she wept greatly when I saw her, and said that she would give all she possessed to save you. She reproached herself deeply for some letter, I know not what. She spoke of the welfare of France, but did not explain herself. She said that she admired you, and conjured you to save yourself, if it were only through pity for her, whom you would otherwise consign to everlasting remorse."

"Said she nothing else?" interrupted De Thou, supporting Cinq-Mars, who grew visibly paler.

"Nothing more," said the old man.

"And no one else spoke of me?" inquired the master of the horse.

"No one," said the Abbé.

"If she had but written to me!" murmured Henri.

"Remember, my father, that you were sent here as a confessor," said De Thou.

Here old Grandchamp, who had been kneeling before Cinq-Mars, and dragging him by his clothes to the other side of the terrace, exclaimed in a broken voice:

"Monseigneur—my master—my good master—do you see them? Look there—'tis they! 'tis they—all of them!"

"Who, my old friend?" asked his master.

"Who? Great Heaven! look at that window! Do you not recognize them? Your mother, your sisters, and your brother."

CINQ-MARS

And the day, now fairly broken, showed him in the distance several women waving their handkerchiefs; and there, dressed all in black, stretching out her arms toward the prison, sustained by those about her, Cinq-Mars recognized his mother, with his family, and his strength failed him for a moment. He leaned his head upon his friend's breast and wept.

"How many times must I, then, die?" he murmured; then, with a gesture, returning from the top of the tower the salutations of his family, "Let us descend quickly, my father!" he said to the old Abbé. "You will tell me at the tribunal of penitence, and before God, whether the remainder of my life is worth my shedding more blood to preserve it."

It was there that Cinq-Mars confessed to God what he alone and Marie de Mantua knew of their secret and unfortunate love. "He gave to his confessor," says Father Daniel, "a portrait of a noble lady, set in diamonds, which were to be sold, and the money employed in pious works."

M. de Thou, after having confessed, wrote a letter*; after which (according to the account given by his confessor) he said, "This is the last thought I will bestow upon this world; let us depart for heaven!" and walking up and down the room with long strides, he recited aloud the psalm, *Miserere mei, Deus*, with an incredible ardor of spirit, his whole frame trembling so violently it seemed as if he did not touch the earth, and that the soul was about to make its exit from his

* See the copy of this letter to Madame la Princesse de Gueménée, in the notes at the end of the volume.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

body. The guards were mute at this spectacle, which made them all shudder with respect and horror.

Meanwhile, all was calm in the city of Lyons, when to the great astonishment of its inhabitants, they beheld the entrance through all its gates of troops of infantry and cavalry, which they knew were encamped at a great distance. The French and the Swiss guards, the regiment of Pompadours, the men-at-arms of Maurevert, and the carabineers of La Roque, all defiled in silence. The cavalry, with their muskets on the pommel of the saddle, silently drew up round the château of Pierre-Encise; the infantry formed a line upon the banks of the Saône from the gate of the fortress to the Place des Terreaux. It was the usual spot for execution.

“Four companies of the *bourgeois* of Lyons, called *pennonage*, of which about eleven or twelve hundred men, were ranged [says the journal of Montrésor] in the midst of the Place des Terreaux, so as to enclose a space of about eighty paces each way, into which they admitted no one but those who were absolutely necessary.

“In the centre of this space was raised a scaffold about seven feet high and nine feet square, in the midst of which, somewhat forward, was placed a stake three feet in height, in front of which was a block half a foot high, so that the principal face of the scaffold looked toward the shambles of the Terreaux, by the side of the Saône. Against the scaffold was placed a short ladder of eight rounds, in the direction of the Dames de St. Pierre.”

Nothing had transpired in the town as to the name of the prisoners. The inaccessible walls of the for-

CINQ-MARS

tress let none enter or leave but at night, and the deep dungeons had sometimes confined father and son for years together, four feet apart from each other, without their even being aware of the vicinity. The surprise was extreme at these striking preparations, and the crowd collected, not knowing whether for a *fête* or for an execution.

This same secrecy which the agents of the minister had strictly preserved was also carefully adhered to by the conspirators, for their heads depended on it.

Montrésor, Fontrailles, the Baron de Beauvau, Olivier d'Entraigues, Gondi, the Comte du Lude, and the Advocate Fournier, disguised as soldiers, workmen, and morris-dancers, armed with poniards under their clothes, had dispersed amid the crowd more than five hundred gentlemen and domestics, disguised like themselves. Horses were ready on the road to Italy, and boats upon the Rhône had been previously engaged. The young Marquis d'Effiat, elder brother of Cinq-Mars, dressed as a Carthusian, traversed the crowd, without ceasing, between the Place des Terreaux and the little house in which his mother and sister were concealed with the Présidente de Pontac, the sister of the unfortunate De Thou. He reassured them, gave them from time to time a ray of hope, and returned to the conspirators to satisfy himself that each was prepared for action.

Each soldier forming the line had at his side a man ready to poniard him.

The vast crowd, heaped together behind the line of guards, pushed them forward, passed their lines, and

ALFRED DE VIGNY

made them lose ground. Ambrosio, the Spanish servant whom Cinq-Mars had saved, had taken charge of the captain of the pikemen, and, disguised as a Catalonian musician, had commenced a dispute with him, pretending to be determined not to cease playing the hurdy-gurdy.

Every one was at his post.

The Abbé de Gondi, Olivier d'Entraigues, and the Marquis d'Effiat were in the midst of a group of fish-women and oyster-wenchs, who were disputing and bawling, abusing one of their number younger and more timid than her masculine companions. The brother of Cinq-Mars approached to listen to their quarrel.

"And why," said she to the others, "would you have Jean le Roux, who is an honest man, cut off the heads of two Christians, because he is a butcher by trade? So long as I am his wife, I'll not allow it. I'd rather——"

"Well, you are wrong!" replied her companions. "What is't to thee whether the meat he cuts is eaten or not eaten? Why, thou'lt have a hundred crowns to dress thy three children all in new clothes. Thou'rt lucky to be the wife of a butcher. Profit, then, *ma mignonne*, by what God sends thee by the favor of his Eminence."

"Let me alone!" answered the first speaker. "I'll not accept it. I've seen these fine young gentlemen at the windows. They look as mild as lambs."

"Well! and are not thy lambs and calves killed?" said Femme le Bon. "What fortune falls to this

CINQ-MARS

little woman! What a pity! especially when it is from the reverend Capuchin!"

"How horrible is the gayety of the people!" said Olivier d'Entraigues, unguardedly. All the women heard him, and began to murmur against him.

"*Of the people!*" said they; "and whence comes this little bricklayer with his plastered clothes?"

"Ah!" interrupted another, "dost not see that 'tis some gentleman in disguise? Look at his white hands! He never worked a square; 'tis some little dandy conspirator. I've a great mind to go and fetch the captain of the watch to arrest him."

The Abbé de Gondi felt all the danger of this situation, and throwing himself with an air of anger upon Olivier, and assuming the manners of a joiner, whose costume and apron he had adopted, he exclaimed, seizing him by the collar:

"You're just right. 'Tis a little rascal that never works! These two years that my father's apprenticed him, he has done nothing but comb his hair to please the girls. Come, get home with you!"

And, striking him with his rule, he drove him through the crowd, and returned to place himself on another part of the line. After having well reprimanded the thoughtless page, he asked him for the letter which he said he had to give to M. de Cinq-Mars when he should have escaped. Olivier had carried it in his pocket for two months. He gave it him. "It is from one prisoner to another," said he, "for the Chevalier de Jars, on leaving the Bastille, sent it me from one of his companions in captivity."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“*Ma foi!*” said Gondi, “there may be some important secret in it for our friends. I’ll open it. You ought to have thought of it before. Ah, bah! it is from old Bassompierre. Let us read it.

MY DEAR CHILD: I learn from the depths of the Bastille, where I still remain, that you are conspiring against the tyrant Richelieu, who does not cease to humiliate our good old nobility and the parliaments, and to sap the foundations of the edifice upon which the State reposes. I hear that the nobles are taxed and condemned by petty judges, contrary to the privileges of their condition, forced to the *arrière-ban*, despite the ancient customs.

“Ah! the old dotard!” interrupted the page, laughing immoderately.

“Not so foolish as you imagine, only he is a little behindhand for our affair.

“I can not but approve this generous project, and I pray you give me to wot all your proceedings——”

“Ah! the old language of the last reign!” said Olivier. “He can’t say ‘Make me acquainted with your proceedings,’ as we now say.”

“Let me read, for Heaven’s sake!” said the Abbé; “a hundred years hence they’ll laugh at our phrases.” He continued:

“I can counsel you, notwithstanding my great age, in relating to you what happened to me in 1560.”

“Ah, faith! I’ve not time to waste in reading it all. Let us see the end.

CINQ-MARS

“When I remember my dining at the house of Madame la Maréchale d’Effiat, your mother, and ask myself what has become of all the guests, I am really afflicted. My poor Puy-Laurens has died at Vincennes, of grief at being forgotten by Monsieur in his prison; De Launay killed in a duel, and I am grieved at it, for although I was little satisfied with my arrest, he did it with courtesy, and I have always thought him a gentleman. As for me, I am under lock and key until the death of M. le Cardinal. Ah, my child! we were thirteen at table. We must not laugh at old superstitions. Thank God that you are the only one to whom evil has not arrived!”

“There again!” said Olivier, laughing heartily; and this time the Abbé de Gondi could not maintain his gravity, despite all his efforts.

They tore the useless letter to pieces, that it might not prolong the detention of the old maréchal, should it be found, and drew near the Place des Terreaux and the line of guards, whom they were to attack when the signal of the hat should be given by the young prisoner.

They beheld with satisfaction all their friends at their posts, and ready “to play with their knives,” to use their own expression. The people, pressing around them, favored them without being aware of it. There came near the Abbé a troop of young ladies dressed in white and veiled. They were going to church to communicate; and the nuns who conducted them, thinking, like most of the people, that the preparations were intended to do honor to some great personage, allowed them to mount upon some large hewn stones, collected behind the soldiers. There they grouped themselves with the grace natural to their age, like twenty beautiful statues upon a single

ALFRED DE VIGNY

pedestal. One would have taken them for those vestals whom antiquity invited to the sanguinary shows of the gladiators. They whispered to each other, looking around them, laughing and blushing together like children.

The Abbé de Gondi saw with impatience that Olivier was again forgetting his character of conspirator and his costume of a bricklayer in ogling these girls, and assuming a mien too elegant, an attitude too refined, for the position in life he was supposed to occupy. He already began to approach them, turning his hair with his fingers, when Fontrailles and Montrésor fortunately arrived in the dress of Swiss soldiers. A group of gentlemen, disguised as sailors, followed them with iron-shod staves in their hands. There was a paleness on their faces which announced no good.

"Stop here!" said one of them to his suite; "this is the place."

The sombre air and the silence of these spectators contrasted with the gay and anxious looks of the girls, and their childish exclamations.

"Ah, the fine procession!" they cried; "there are at least five hundred men with cuirasses and red uniforms, upon fine horses. They've got yellow feathers in their large hats."

"They are strangers—Catalonians," said a French guard.

"Whom are they conducting here? Ah, here is a fine gilt coach! but there's no one in it."

"Ah! I see three men on foot; where are they going?"

CINQ-MARS

“To death!” said Fontrailles, in a deep, stern voice which silenced all around. Nothing was heard but the slow tramp of the horses, which suddenly stopped, from one of those delays that happen in all processions. They then beheld a painful and singular spectacle. An old man with a tonsured head walked with difficulty, sobbing violently, supported by two young men of interesting and engaging appearance, who held one of each other’s hands behind his bent shoulders, while with the other each held one of his arms. The one on the left was dressed in black; he was grave, and his eyes were cast down. The other, much younger, was attired in a striking dress. A *pourpoint* of Holland cloth, adorned with broad gold lace, and with large embroidered sleeves, covered him from the neck to the waist, somewhat in the fashion of a woman’s corset; the rest of his vestments were in black velvet, embroidered with silver palms. Gray boots with red heels, to which were attached golden spurs; a scarlet cloak with gold buttons—all set off to advantage his elegant and graceful figure. He bowed right and left with a melancholy smile.

An old servant, with white moustache, and beard, followed with his head bent down, leading two chargers, richly comparisond. The young ladies were silent; but they could not restrain their sobs.

“It is, then, that poor old man whom they are leading to the scaffold,” they exclaimed; “and his children are supporting him.”

“Upon your knees, ladies,” said a man, “and pray for him!”

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"On your knees," cried Gondi, "and let us pray that God will deliver him!"

All the conspirators repeated, "On your knees! on your knees!" and set the example to the people, who imitated them in silence.

"We can see his movements better now," said Gondi, in a whisper to Montrésor. "Stand up; what is he doing?"

"He has stopped, and is speaking on our side, saluting us; I think he has recognized us."

Every house, window, wall, roof, and raised platform that looked upon the place was filled with persons of every age and condition.

The most profound silence prevailed throughout the immense multitude. One might have heard the wings of a gnat, the breath of the slightest wind, the passage of the grains of dust which it raised; yet the air was calm, the sun brilliant, the sky blue. The people listened attentively. They were close to the Place des Terreaux; they heard the blows of the hammer upon the planks, then the voice of Cinq-Mars.

A young Carthusian thrust his pale face between two guards. All the conspirators rose above the kneeling people. Every one put his hand to his belt or in his bosom, approaching close to the soldier whom he was to poniard.

"What is he doing?" asked the Carthusian. "Has he his hat upon his head?"

"He throws his hat upon the ground far from him," calmly answered the arquebusier.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE FÊTE

“Mon Dieu! qu'est-ce que ce monde!”

Dernières paroles de M. Cinq-Mars.



THE same day that the melancholy procession took place at Lyons, and during the scenes we have just witnessed, a magnificent *fête* was given at Paris with all the luxury and bad taste of the time. The powerful Cardinal had determined to fill the first two towns in France with his pomp. The Cardinal's return was the occasion on which this *fête* was announced, as given to the King and all his court.

Master of the French empire by force, the Cardinal desired to be master of French opinion by seduction; and, weary of dominating, hoped to please. The tragedy of “*Mirame*” was to be represented in a hall constructed expressly for this great day, which raised the expenses of this entertainment, says Pelisson, to three hundred thousand crowns.

The entire guard of the Prime-Minister were under arms; his four companies of musketeers and *gens d'armes* were ranged in a line upon the vast staircases and at the entrance of the long galleries of the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Palais-Cardinal. This brilliant pandemonium, where the mortal sins have a temple on each floor, belonged that day to pride alone, which occupied it from top to bottom. Upon each step was placed one of the arquebusiers of the Cardinal's guard, holding a torch in one hand and a long carbine in the other. The crowd of his gentlemen circulated between these living candelabra, while in the large garden, surrounded by huge chestnut-trees, now replaced by a range of archers, two companies of mounted light-horse, their muskets in their hands, were ready to obey the first order or the first fear of their master.

The Cardinal, carried and followed by his thirty-eight pages, took his seat in his box hung with purple, facing that in which the King was half reclining behind the green curtains which preserved him from the glare of the flambeaux. The whole court filled the boxes, and rose when the King appeared. The orchestra commenced a brilliant overture, and the pit was thrown open to all the men of the town and the army who presented themselves. Three impetuous waves of spectators rushed in and filled it in an instant. They were standing, and so thickly pressed together that the movement of a single arm sufficed to cause in the crowd a movement similar to the waving of a field of corn. There was one man whose head thus described a large circle, as that of a compass, without his feet quitting the spot to which they were fixed; and some young men were carried out fainting.

The minister, contrary to custom, advanced his skeleton head out of his box, and saluted the as-

CINQ-MARS

sembly with an air which was meant to be gracious. This grimace obtained an acknowledgment only from the boxes; the pit was silent. Richelieu had wished to show that he did not fear the public judgment upon his work, and had given orders to admit without distinction all who should present themselves. He began to repent of this, but too late. The impartial assembly was as cold at the *tragédie-pastorale* itself. In vain did the theatrical *bergères*, covered with jewels, raised upon red heels, with crooks ornamented with ribbons and garlands of flowers upon their robes, which were stuck out with farthingale's, die of love in tirades of two hundred verses; in vain did the *amants parfaits* starve themselves in solitary caves, deploring their death in emphatic tones, and fastening to their hair ribbons of the favorite color of their mistress; in vain did the ladies of the court exhibit signs of perfect ecstasy, leaning over the edges of their boxes, and even attempt a few fainting-fits—the silent pit gave no other sign of life than the perpetual shaking of black heads with long hair.

The Cardinal bit his lips and played the abstracted during the first and second acts; the silence in which the third and fourth passed off so wounded his paternal heart that he had himself raised half out of the balcony, and in this uncomfortable and ridiculous position signed to the court to remark the finest passages, and himself gave the signal for applause. It was acted upon from some of the boxes, but the impassible pit was more silent than ever; leaving the affair entirely between the stage and the upper regions, they

ALFRED DE VIGNY

obstinately remained neuter. The master of Europe and France then cast a furious look at this handful of men who dared not to admire his work, feeling in his heart the wish of Nero, and thought for a moment how happy he should be if all those men had but one head.

Suddenly this black and before silent mass became animated, and endless rounds of applause burst forth, to the great astonishment of the boxes, and above all, of the minister. He bent forward and bowed gratefully, but drew back on perceiving that the clapping of hands interrupted the actors every time they wished to proceed. The King had the curtains of his box, until then closed, opened, to see what excited so much enthusiasm. The whole court leaned forward from their boxes, and perceived among the spectators on the stage a young man, humbly dressed, who had just seated himself there with difficulty. Every look was fixed upon him. He appeared utterly embarrassed by this, and sought to cover himself with his little black cloak—far too short for the purpose. “*Le Cid! le Cid!*” cried the pit, incessantly applauding.

“Terrified, Corneille escaped behind the scenes, and all was again silent. The Cardinal, beside himself with fury, had his curtain closed, and was carried into his galleries, where was performed another scene, prepared long before by the care of Joseph, who had tutored the attendants upon the point before quitting Paris. Cardinal Mazarin exclaimed that it would be quicker to pass his Eminence through a long glazed window, which was only two feet from the ground,

CINQ-MARS

and led from his box to the apartments; and it opened and the page passed his armchair through it. Here-upon a hundred voices rose to proclaim the accomplishment of the grand prophecy of Nostradamus. They said:

“The *bonnet rouge*!—that’s Monseigneur; *quarante onces*!—that’s Cinq-Mars; *tout finira*!—that’s De Thou. What a providential incident! His Eminence reigns over the future as over the present.”

He advanced thus upon his ambulatory throne through the long and splendid galleries, listening to this delicious murmur of a new flattery; but insensible to the hum of voices which deified his genius, he would have given all their praises for one word, one single gesture of that immovable and inflexible public, even had that word been a cry of hatred; for clamor can be stifled, but how avenge one’s self on silence? The people can be prevented from striking, but who can prevent their waiting? Pursued by the troublesome phantom of public opinion, the gloomy minister only thought himself in safety when he reached the interior of his palace amid his flattering courtiers, whose adorations soon made him forget that a miserable pit had dared not to admire him. He had himself placed like a king in the midst of his vast apartments, and, looking around him, attentively counted the powerful and submissive men who surrounded him.

Counting them, he admired himself. The chiefs of the great families, the princes of the Church, the presidents of all the parliaments, the governors of the provinces, the marshals and generals-in-chief of the armies,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the nuncio, the ambassadors of all the kingdoms, the deputies and senators of the republics, were motionless, submissive, and ranged around him, as if awaiting his orders. There was no longer a look to brave his look, no longer a word to raise itself against his will, not a project that men dared to form in the most secret recesses of the heart, not a thought which did not proceed from his. Mute Europe listened to him by its representatives. From time to time he raised an imperious voice, and threw a self-satisfied word to this pompous circle, as a man who throws a copper coin among a crowd of beggars. Then might be distinguished, by the pride which lit up his looks and the joy visible in his countenance, the prince who had received such a favor.

Transformed into another man, he seemed to have made a step in the hierarchy of power, so surrounded with unlooked-for adorations and sudden caresses was the fortunate courtier, whose obscure happiness the Cardinal did not even perceive. The King's brother and the Duc de Bouillon stood in the crowd, whence the minister did not deign to withdraw them. Only he ostentatiously said that it would be well to dismantle a few fortresses, spoke at length of the necessity of pavements and quays at Paris, and said in two words to Turenne that he might perhaps be sent to the army in Italy, to seek his baton as *maréchal* from Prince Thomas.

While Richelieu thus played with the great and small things of Europe, amid his noisy *fête*, the Queen was informed at the Louvre that the time was come

CINQ-MARS

for her to proceed to the Cardinal's palace, where the King awaited her after the tragedy. The serious Anne of Austria did not witness any play; but she could not refuse her presence at the *fête* of the Prime-Minister. She was in her oratory, ready to depart, and covered with pearls, her favorite ornament; standing opposite a large glass with Marie de Mantua, she was arranging more to her satisfaction one or two details of the young Duchess's toilette, who, dressed in a long pink robe, was herself contemplating with attention, though with somewhat of ennui and a little sullenness, the *ensemble* of her appearance.

She saw her own work in Marie, and, more troubled, thought with deep apprehension of the moment when this transient calm would cease, despite the profound knowledge she had of the feeling but frivolous character of Marie. Since the conversation at St.-Germain (the fatal letter), she had not quitted the young Princess, and had bestowed all her care to lead her mind to the path which she had traced out for her, for the most decided feature in the character of Anne of Austria was an invincible obstinacy in her calculations, to which she would fain have subjected all events and all passions with a geometrical exactitude. There is no doubt that to this positive and immovable mind we must attribute all the misfortunes of her regency. The sombre reply of Cinq-Mars; his arrest; his trial—all had been concealed from the Princesse Marie, whose first fault, it is true, had been a movement of self-love and a momentary forgetfulness.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

However, the Queen by nature was good-hearted, and had bitterly repented her precipitation in writing words so decisive, and whose consequences had been so serious; and all her endeavors had been applied to mitigate the results. In reflecting upon her conduct in reference to the happiness of France, she applauded herself for having thus, at one stroke, stifled the germ of a civil war which would have shaken the State to its very foundations. But when she approached her young friend and gazed on that charming being whose happiness she was thus destroying in its bloom, and reflected that an old man upon a throne, even, would not recompense her for the eternal loss she was about to sustain; when she thought of the entire devotion, the total abnegation of himself, she had witnessed in a young man of twenty-two, of so lofty a character, and almost master of the kingdom—she pitied Marie, and admired from her very soul the man whom she had judged so ill.

She would at least have desired to explain his worth to her whom he had loved so deeply, and who as yet knew him not; but she still hoped that the conspirators assembled at Lyons would be able to save him, and once knowing him to be in a foreign land she could tell all to her dear Marie.

As to the latter, she had at first feared war. But surrounded by the Queen's people, who had let nothing reach her ear but news dictated by this Princess, she knew, or thought she knew, that the conspiracy had not taken place; that the King and the Cardinal had returned to Paris nearly at the same time; that

CINQ-MARS

Monsieur, relapsed for a while, had reappeared at court; that the Duc de Bouillon, on ceding Sedan, had also been restored to favor; and that if the *grand écuyer* had not yet appeared, the reason was the more decided animosity of the Cardinal toward him, and the greater part he had taken in the conspiracy. But common sense and natural justice clearly said that having acted under the order of the King's brother, his pardon ought to follow that of this Prince.

All then, had calmed the first uneasiness of her heart, while nothing had softened the kind of proud resentment she felt against Cinq-Mars, so indifferent as not to inform her of the place of his retreat, known to the Queen and the whole court, while, she said to herself, she had thought but of him. Besides, for two months the balls and *fêtes* had so rapidly succeeded each other, and so many mysterious duties had commanded her presence, that she had for reflection and regret scarce more than the time of her toilette, at which she was generally almost alone. Every evening she regularly commenced the general reflection upon the ingratitude and inconstancy of men—a profound and novel thought, which never fails to occupy the head of a young person in the time of first love—but sleep never permitted her to finish the reflection; and the fatigue of dancing closed her large black eyes ere her ideas had found time to classify themselves in her memory, or to present her with any distinct images of the past.

In the morning she was always surrounded by the young princesses of the court, and ere she well had

ALFRED DE VIGNY

time to dress had to present herself in the Queen's apartment, where awaited her the eternal, but now less disagreeable homage of the Prince-Palatine. The Poles had had time to learn at the court of France that mysterious reserve, that eloquent silence which so pleases the women, because it enhances the importance of things always secret, and elevates those whom they respect, so as to preclude the idea of exhibiting suffering in their presence. Marie was regarded as promised to King Uladislas; and she herself—we must confess it—had so well accustomed herself to this idea that the throne of Poland occupied by another queen would have appeared to her a monstrous thing. She did not look forward with pleasure to the period of ascending it, but had, however, taken possession of the homage which was rendered her beforehand. Thus, without avowing it even to herself, she greatly exaggerated the supposed offences of Cinq-Mars, which the Queen had expounded to her at St.-Germain.

“You are as fresh as the roses in this bouquet,” said the Queen. “Come, *ma chère*, are you ready? What means this pouting air? Come, let me fasten this earring. Do you not like these toys, eh? Will you have another set of ornaments?”

“Oh, no, Madame. I think that I ought not to decorate myself at all, for no one knows better than yourself how unhappy I am. Men are very cruel toward us! “I have reflected on what you said, and all is now clear to me. Yes, it is quite true that he did not love me, for had he loved me he would have

CINQ-MARS

renounced an enterprise that gave me so much uneasiness. I told him, I remember, indeed, which was very decided," she added, with an important and even solemn air, "that he would be a rebel—yes, Madame, a rebel. I told him so at Saint-Eustache. But I see that your Majesty was right. I am very unfortunate! He had more ambition than love." Here a tear of pique escaped from her eyes, and rolled quickly down her cheek, as a pearl upon a rose.

"Yes, it is certain," she continued, fastening her bracelets; "and the greatest proof is that in the two months he has renounced his enterprise—you told me that you had saved him—he has not let me know the place of his retreat, while I during that time have been weeping, have been imploring all your power in his favor; have sought but a word that might inform me of his proceedings. I have thought but of him; and even now I refuse every day the throne of Poland, because I wish to prove to the end that I am constant, that you yourself can not make me disloyal to my attachment, far more serious than his, and that we are of higher worth than the men. But, however, I think I may attend this *fête*, since it is not a ball."

"Yes, yes, my dear child! come, come!" said the Queen, desirous of putting an end to this childish talk, which afflicted her all the more that it was herself who had encouraged it. "Come, you will see the union that prevails between the princes and the Cardinal, and we shall perhaps hear some good news." They departed.

When the two princesses entered the long galleries

ALFRED DE VIGNY

of the Palais-Cardinal, they were received and coldly saluted by the King and the minister, who, closely surrounded by silent courtiers, were playing at chess upon a small low table. All the ladies who entered with the Queen or followed her, spread through the apartments; and soon soft music sounded in one of the saloons—a gentle accompaniment to the thousand private conversations carried on round the play tables.

Near the Queen passed, saluting her, a young newly married couple—the happy Chabot and the beautiful Duchesse de Rohan. They seemed to shun the crowd, and to seek apart a moment to speak to each other of themselves. Every one received them with a smile and looked after them with envy. Their happiness was expressed as strongly in the countenances of others as in their own.

Marie followed them with her eyes. “Still they are happy,” she whispered to the Queen, remembering the censure which in her hearing had been thrown upon the match.

But without answering, Anne of Austria, fearful that in the crowd some inconsiderate expression might inform her young friend of the mournful event so interesting to her, placed herself with Marie behind the King. Monsieur, the Prince-Palatine, and the Duc de Bouillon came to speak to her with a gay and lively air. The second, however, casting upon Marie a severe and scrutinizing glance, said to her:

“Madame la Princesse, you are most surprisingly beautiful and gay this evening.”

She was confused at these words, and at seeing the

CINQ-MARS

speaker walk away with a sombre air. She addressed herself to the Duc d'Orléans, who did not answer, and seemed not to hear her. Marie looked at the Queen, and thought she remarked paleness and disquiet on her features. Meantime, no one ventured to approach the minister, who was deliberately meditating his moves. Mazarin alone, leaning over his chair, followed all the strokes with a servile attention, giving gestures of admiration every time that the Cardinal played. Application to the game seemed to have dissipated for a moment the cloud that usually shaded the minister's brow. He had just advanced a tower, which placed Louis's king in that false position which is called "stale mate,"—a situation in which the ebony king, without being personally attacked, can neither advance nor retire in any direction. The Cardinal, raising his eyes, looked at his adversary and smiled with one corner of his mouth, not being able to avoid a secret analogy. Then, observing the dim eyes and dying countenance of the Prince, he whispered to Mazarin:

"Faith, I think he'll go before me. He is greatly changed.

At the same time he himself was seized with a long and violent cough, accompanied internally with the sharp, deep pain he so often felt in the side. At the sinister warning he put a handkerchief to his mouth, which he withdrew covered with blood. To hide it, he threw it under the table, and looked around him with a stern smile, as if to forbid observation. Louis XIII, perfectly insensible, did not make the least

ALFRED DE VIGNY

movement, beyond arranging his men for another game with a skeleton and trembling hand. There two dying men seemed to be throwing lots which should depart first.

At this moment a clock struck the hour of midnight. The King raised his head.

"Ah, ah!" he said; "this morning at twelve Monsieur le Grand had a disagreeable time of it."

A piercing shriek was uttered behind him. He shuddered, and threw himself forward, upsetting the table. Marie de Mantua lay senseless in the arms of the Queen, who, weeping bitterly, said in the King's ear:

"Ah, Sire, your axe has a double edge."

She then bestowed all her cares and maternal kisses upon the young Princess, who, surrounded by all the ladies of the court, only came to herself to burst into a torrent of tears. As soon as she opened her eyes, "Alas! yes, my child," said Anne of Austria. "My poor girl, you are Queen of Poland."

It has often happened that the same event which causes tears to flow in the palace of kings has spread joy without, for the people ever suppose that happiness reigns at festivals. There were five days' rejoicings for the return of the minister, and every evening under the windows of the Palais-Cardinal and those of the Louvre pressed the people of Paris. The late disturbances had given them a taste for public movements. They rushed from one street to another with a curiosity at times insulting and hostile, sometimes

CINQ-MARS

walking in silent procession, sometimes sending forth loud peals of laughter or prolonged yells, of which no one understood the meaning. Bands of young men fought in the streets and danced in rounds in the squares, as if manifesting some secret hope of pleasure and some insensate joy, grievous to the upright heart.

It was remarkable that profound silence prevailed exactly in those places where the minister had ordered rejoicings, and that the people passed disdainfully before the illuminated façade of his palace. If some voices were raised, it was to read aloud in a sneering tone the legends and inscriptions with which the idiot flattery of some obscure writers had surrounded the portraits of the minister. One of these pictures was guarded by arquebusiers, who, however, could not preserve it from the stones which were thrown at it from a distance by unseen hands. It represented the Cardinal-Generalissimo wearing a casque surrounded by laurels. Above it was inscribed

“Grand Duc! c’est justement que la France t’honore;
Ainsi que le dieu Mars dans Paris on t’adore.”

These fine phrases did not persuade the people that they were happy. They no more adored the Cardinal than they did the god Mars, but they accepted his *fêtes* because they served as a covering for disorder. All Paris was in an uproar. Men with long beards, carrying torches, measures of wine, and two drinking-cups, which they knocked together with a great noise, went along, arm in arm, shouting in chorus with rude voices an old round of the League:

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“Reprenons la danse;
Allons, c'est assez.
Le printemps commence;
Les rois sont passés.

“Prenons quelque trêve;
Nous sommes lassés.
Les rois de la fève
Nous ont harassés.

“Allons, Jean du Mayne,
Les rois sont passés.

“Les rois de la fève
Nous ont harassés.
Allons, Jean du Mayne,
Les rois sont passés.”

The frightful bands who howled forth these words traversed the Quais and the Pont-Neuf, squeezing against the high houses, which then covered the latter, the peaceful citizens who were led there by simple curiosity. Two young men, wrapped in cloaks, thus thrown one against the other, recognized each other by the light of a torch placed at the foot of the statue of Henri IV, which had been lately raised.

“What! still at Paris?” said Corneille to Milton.
“I thought you were in London.”

“Hear you the people, Monsieur? Do you hear them? What is this ominous chorus,

‘Les rois sont passés’?”

“That is nothing, Monsieur. Listen to their conversation.”

CINQ-MARS

"The parliament is dead," said one of the men; "the nobles are dead. Let us dance; we are the masters. The old Cardinal is dying. There is no longer any but the King and ourselves."

"Do you hear that drunken wretch, Monsieur?" asked Corneille. "All our epoch is in those words of his."

"What! is this the work of the minister who is called great among you, and even by other nations? I do not understand him."

"I will explain the matter to you presently," answered Corneille. "But first listen to the concluding part of this letter, which I received to-day. Draw near this light under the statue of the late King. We are alone. The crowd has passed. Listen!

"It was by one of those unforeseen circumstances which prevent the accomplishment of the noblest enterprises that we were not able to save MM. de Cinq-Mars and De Thou. We might have foreseen that, prepared for death by long meditation, they would themselves refuse our aid; but this idea did not occur to any of us. In the precipitation of our measures, we also committed the fault of dispersing ourselves too much in the crowd, so that we could not take a sudden resolution. I was unfortunately stationed near the scaffold; and I saw our unfortunate friends advance to the foot of it, supporting the poor Abbé Quillet, who was destined to behold the death of the pupil whose birth he had witnessed. He sobbed aloud, and had strength enough only to kiss the hands of the two friends. We all advanced, ready to throw ourselves upon the guards at the announced signal; but I saw with grief M. de Cinq-Mars cast his hat from him with an air of disdain. Our movement had been observed, and the Catalonian guard was doubled round the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

scaffold. I could see no more; but I heard much weeping around me. After the three usual blasts of the trumpet, the recorder of Lyons, on horseback at a little distance from the scaffold, read the sentence of death, to which neither of the prisoners listened. M. de Thou said to M. de Cinq-Mars:

“‘Well, dear friend, which shall die first? Do you remember Saint-Gervais and Saint-Protais?’

“‘Which you think best,’ answered Cinq-Mars.

“The second confessor, addressing M. de Thou, said, ‘You are the elder.’

“‘True,’ said M. de Thou; and, turning to M. le Grand, ‘You are the most generous; you will show me the way to the glory of heaven.’

“‘Alas!’ said Cinq-Mars; ‘I have opened to you that of the precipice; but let us meet death nobly, and we shall revel in the glory and happiness of heaven!’

“Hereupon he embraced him, and ascended the scaffold with surprising address and agility. He walked round the scaffold, and contemplated the whole of the great assembly with a calm countenance, which betrayed no sign of fear, and a serious and graceful manner. He then went round once more, saluting the people on every side, without appearing to recognize any of us, with a majestic and charming expression of face; he then knelt down, raising his eyes to heaven, adoring God, and recommending himself to Him. As he embraced the crucifix, the father confessor called to the people to pray for him; and M. le Grand, opening his arms, still holding his crucifix, made the same request to the people. Then he readily knelt before the block, holding the stake, placed his neck upon it, and asked the confessor, ‘Father, is this right?’ Then, while they were cutting off his hair, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said, sighing:

“‘My God, what is this world? My God, I offer thee my death as a satisfaction for my sins!’

“‘What are you waiting for? What are you doing there?’ he said to the executioner, who had not yet taken his axe from an old bag he had brought with him. His confessor, approach-

CINQ-MARS

ing, gave him a medallion; and he, with an incredible tranquillity of mind, begged the father to hold the crucifix before his eyes, which he would not allow to be bound. I saw the two trembling hands of the Abbé Quillet, who raised the crucifix. At this moment a voice, as clear and pure as that of an angel, commenced the *Ave, maris stella*. In the universal silence I recognized the voice of M. de Thou, who was at the foot of the scaffold; the people repeated the sacred strain. M. de Cinq-Mars clung more tightly to the stake; and I saw a raised axe, made like the English axes. A terrible cry of the people from the Place, the windows, and the towers told me that it had fallen, and that the head had rolled to the ground. I had happily strength enough left to think of his soul, and to commence a prayer for him.

I mingled it with that which I heard pronounced aloud by our unfortunate and pious friend De Thou. I rose and saw him spring upon the scaffold with such promptitude that he might almost have been said to fly. The father and he recited a psalm; he uttered it with the ardor of a seraphim, as if his soul had borne his body to heaven. Then, kneeling down, he kissed the blood of Cinq-Mars as that of a martyr, and became himself a greater martyr. I do not know whether God was pleased to grant him this last favor; but I saw with horror that the executioner, terrified no doubt at the first blow he had given, struck him upon the top of his head, whither the unfortunate young man raised his hand; the people sent forth a long groan, and advanced against the executioner. The poor wretch, terrified still more, struck him another blow, which only cut the skin and threw him upon the scaffold, where the executioner rolled upon him to despatch him. A strange event terrified the people as much as the horrible spectacle. M. de Cinq-Mars' old servant held his horse as at a military funeral; he had stopped at the foot of the scaffold, and like a man paralyzed, watched his master to the end, then suddenly, as if struck by the same axe, fell dead under the blow which had taken off his master's head.

"I write these sad details in haste, on board a Genoese galley,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

into which Fontrailles, Gondi, Entraigues, Beauvau, Du Lude, myself, and others of the chief conspirators have retired. We are going to England to await until time shall deliver France from the tyrant whom we could not destroy. I abandon forever the service of the base Prince who betrayed us.

“MONTRÉSOR”

“Such,” continued Corneille, “has been the fate of these two young men whom you lately saw so powerful. Their last sigh was that of the ancient monarchy. Nothing more than a court can reign here henceforth; the nobles and the senates are destroyed.”

“And this is your pretended great man!” said Milton. “What has he sought to do? He would, then, create republics for future ages, since he destroys the basis of your monarchy?”

“Look not so far,” answered Corneille; “he only seeks to reign until the end of his life. He has worked for the present and not for the future; he has continued the work of Louis XI; and neither one nor the other knew what they were doing.”

The Englishman smiled.

“I thought,” he said, “that true genius followed another path. This man has shaken all that he ought to have supported, and they admire him! I pity your nation.”

“Pity it not!” exclaimed Corneille, warmly; “a man passes away, but a people is renewed. This people, Monsieur, is gifted with an immortal energy, which nothing can destroy; its imagination often leads

CINQ-MARS

it astray, but superior reason will ever ultimately master its disorders."

The two young and already great men walked, as they conversed, upon the space which separates the statue of Henri IV from the Place Dauphiné; they stopped a moment in the centre of this Place.

"Yes, Monsieur," continued Corneille, "I see every evening with what rapidity a noble thought finds its echo in French hearts; and every evening I retire happy at the sight. Gratitude prostrates the poor people before this statue of a good king! Who knows what other monument another passion may raise near this? Who can say how far the love of glory will lead our people? Who knows that in the place where we now are, there may not be raised a pyramid taken from the East?"

"These are the secrets of the future," said Milton. "I, like yourself, admire your impassioned nation; but I fear them for themselves. I do not well understand them; and I do not recognize their wisdom when I see them lavishing their admiration upon men such as he who now rules you. The love of power is very puerile; and this man is devoured by it, without having force enough to seize it wholly. By an utter absurdity, he is a tyrant under a master. Thus has this colossus, never firmly balanced, been all but overthrown by the finger of a boy. Does that indicate genius? No, no! when genius condescends to quit the lofty regions of its true home for a human passion, at least, it should grasp that passion in its entirety. Since Richelieu only aimed at power, why

ALFRED DE VIGNY

did he not, if he was a genius, make himself absolute master of power? I am going to see a man who is not yet known, and whom I see swayed by this miserable ambition; but I think that he will go farther. His name is Cromwell!”

NOTES

NOTES



WHEN this book appeared for the first time,* it was issued without notes, simply as a work of art, or as a historical summary of a century. That it should be impartially judged by the public, the author declined to surround it in any way with that deceptive semblance of historic research, with which it is so easy to adorn a new book. In accordance with the theory set forth in his preface, he wished not to show the *true* in detail, but the epic work, the composition with its tragedy, in the scenes of which appear all the eminent personages of the time of Louis XIII. The author, however, soon found it necessary to indicate the principal sources of his labors; and as he had ever desired to go back to the head-springs—that is to say, to the manuscripts, and in default of them, to contemporary impressions,—he added the present documents to the second edition of “Cinq-Mars,”† to correct the erroneous idea prevalent as to the authenticity of some facts. Subsequently, he returned to the simple and primitive unity of his work. But now again that his production has been multiplied in editions far more numerous than he could have expected, he is desirous

* March, 1826, 2 vols.

† June, 1826.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

that minds curious as to the details of the original story—should not have to seek elsewhere for the documents used.

FATHER JOSEPH'S BEARD.

“In his youth,” says the historian of Father Joseph, “his hair and beard were of a brilliant red. He perceived that Louis XIII could not bear this color, and he accordingly took pains to darken it to brown, by using combs of lead and steel, until he learned the secret of turning it white, which was afterward communicated to him by a quack doctor. The King’s horror for red hair was so great that one day his first gentleman of the chamber (whose brother held the finest governorship in the kingdom) having the honor to accompany his Majesty to Fontainebleau on a hunting expedition, it rained so hard that it washed away all the dye with which he concealed the redness of his hair. The Prince, perceiving it, was terrified, and said to him, ‘Good God, what do I see? never appear again before me!’ The gentleman was obliged to resign his post.”

“HIS CONFIDANT.”

From the same source we learn:

“This very celebrated Capuchin, whom one of his biographers calls *the familiar spirit* of the Cardinal, was not only his confidant, but depositary to the King himself. Merciless, pliant, and base, he strengthened the steps of the minister in the path of blood, and assisted him to draw thithert he feeble Prince. The history of this man is known everywhere. Here are the details of one of his schemes, which is little known:

“Montmorency was captured at Castelnaudary. Louis XIII hesitated to execute him. Monsieur, who had abandoned him on the field of battle, earnestly sought pardon for him. The Cardinal

CINQ-MARS

desired his death, but did not know how to obtain this precious favor. Bouillon was charged with the negotiation. It was he who counselled Gaston. To him Joseph first addressed himself.

"He influenced him with serpent-like guile, and through him counselled Monsieur not to demand assurances from the King to the young duke's pardon, but to leave the affair to Louis's goodness alone, whose heart, he said, was afflicted by the appearance of doubt on that subject. Monsieur thought he saw in this suggestion an intention to pardon, insinuated by his brother himself, and made peace for himself alone, without asking anything for the young duke, and referring him to the King's clemency. It was then that, in a secret conference of the King, the Cardinal, and Joseph, the latter ventured to speak first, and adding the energy of his political vociferations to the phlegmatic arguments of the Cardinal, forced from Louis the promise, too well kept, that he would be inflexible."

Brulart de Léon, ambassador at Ratisbon with Joseph, says that the Capuchin had nothing Christian about him but the name, and sought only to deceive all the world.

A work issued in 1635, entitled "*La Vérité Défendue*," speaks of him in these terms:

"He is the grand inquisitor of the State, interrogates alleged criminals, throws them into prison without any charge, preventing their justification being heard, and by terrorizing draws out declarations which serve to hide the Cardinal's injustice. He shamefully abases heaven to his earthly purposes, and uses the name of God for deceptions, and of religion for the plots of State."

He came of a very good family, by name Du Tremblay. To the biography of this unworthy monk I refer those who would be better acquainted with him.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“THE CARDINAL DICTATED TO HIM DUTIES.”

The insolent commands of ministerial religion, laid down by Richelieu, are extracted from a manuscript mentioned in the history of Father Joseph.

This is how the reverend and ingenuous historian and genealogist, taking up the parable of Abbé Richard, expresses himself on the subject:

“He composed, with the Cardinal, a book entitled ‘L’Unité du Ministre, et les Qualités qu’il doit avoir.’ This work never went beyond the King’s hands; and it was this treatise which determined his Majesty to vest the entire government of his kingdom in his Eminence. I have seen this manuscript in folio; it is well written. One can easily see that Father Joseph is the author of it by reading the principal propositions set forth therein—first, as Christian verities; secondly, as political truths. This work might be entitled ‘Testament politique du Père Joseph.’ All the great men of the past century left such.”

The reader will easily recognize the peculiar genius of Richelieu by reading at random in the document.

“AS TO MARILLAC,” ETC.

“The Maréchal de Marillac was deprived of his legitimate judges—the members of the parliament—who in vain endeavored to take cognizance of the affair, but saw Molé, their attorney-general, silenced. Dragged from tribunal to tribunal, without finding one sufficiently clever to detect a crime in him, the Maréchal de Marillac finally succumbed to a decree, read by a keeper of the ecclesiastical seals (Châteauneuf), from Rome, procured

CINQ-MARS

expressly to enable the Cardinal to condemn a man without reproach. The Cardinal laughed at the *spectacles* he had forcibly put on the noses of the judges, as he phrased it. What confusion! what a time! We can not throw too great a light upon the principal points of history, to extinguish puerile regrets for the past in those minds which do not sufficiently examine the history of the period."

TO-DAY, THE CARDINAL APPEARED CLAD, ETC.

This costume is described at length in the "Memoirs of Pontis" to be found in the "Library of the Arsenal."

"TO HAVE EXTIRPATED A ROYAL BOURBON BRANCH."

The Comte de Soissons, assassinated at the battle of Marfée, which he gained over the troops of the Cardinal. I have before me the most detailed contemporary accounts of this affair. They state as follows:

"The regiments of Metternich and the infantry of Lamboy having broken their ranks, there remained near the said count only two or three of his men. In this confusion, he was approached by a single cavalier, whom his men did not recognize in this confusion as an enemy. The latter shot him below the eye, and killed him upon the spot. This great Prince, having no other design than to serve his Majesty and his kingdom, and to stop the violence of him who seeks to undermine all who are above him, he, the Cardinal, has thus extirpated a royal scion of the house of Bourbon, having had the Prince marked and shot by one of his guards, who

ALFRED DE VIGNY

had placed himself, with this horrible design and by his command, among the prince's men. Recognized as such he was killed on the spot by Riquemont, esquire of the defunct prince." *

There exists, in the "Bibliothèque de Paris," a curious autograph, which shows how much the Cardinal relied on such expeditions. It runs thus:

Letter of M. des Noyers to M. le Maréchal de Chatillon, after the battle of Sedan.

The King has resolved to give a government and a pension for life to the soldier who killed the enemy's general. M. le Maréchal will send the soldier in question to Reims to his Majesty immediately upon his arrival. Done at Péronne, this 9 July, 1641.

DES NOYERS.

Vol. g. 6, 233 MM.

Examination of the Secret Correspondence of the Cardinal de Richelieu, relative to the trial of MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.

The indefatigable activity, the vivid penetration, the ingenious perseverance of the Cardinal de Richelieu at the close of his life, when illness, fatigue, and vexation might well have deadened his rare faculties, are not alone evidenced in the conduct of this affair. It is curious and most painful to observe the subterrene ways through which this potent miner, this *worthy pioneer!* passed to arrive at his end. All the meannesses to which political laborers are forced to stoop would render their imitators more modest did they consider that this man after the entire accomplishment of his projects

* Montglat, Fabert, etc., Relation de Montresor, t. ii. p. 520.

CINQ-MARS

only succeeded in hastening and assuring the fall of the absolute monarchy which he thought he had established forever.

To place these documents properly before the reader it is necessary to omit the long technicalities of the *procès-verbal*, the dryness and confusion of which have, no doubt, disgusted all those who have looked at it. But it is desirable to extract the curious and vivid facts which are apparent in the darkness, when we look attentively into it.

As soon as M. de Cinq-Mars is arrested, and the Duc d'Orléans has excused himself in the letter cited in the course of this work,* the first anxiety of the Cardinal is to know whether M. de Bouillon is arrested. Thus in doubt, and fearing the return of Louis XIII to his early affection for Cinq-Mars, he stops at Tarascon, and seeks to satisfy himself that his influence is still in the ascendant. Like a gladiator preparing for battle, he essays his arms and balances his weapon.

Instructions after the arrest of M. le Grand to MM. de Chavigny and des Noyers, being with the King, to learn, among other things, from his Majesty if his Eminence shall act as heretofore, that is, as he shall think fit.

If M. de Bouillon is taken, it is necessary to show promptly that he has been justly arrested. To do this, it must be found out who of the friends of Madame have taken part in the matter; and in case the said lady will not afford information, you must devise some plan by which it may appear that you have

* Vol. ii. chap. xxiv.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

a knowledge of the matter. For this purpose all the prisoners must be separated, and not be allowed to speak with any one. By this means you *may make one believe that another has confessed all he knows, and thus induce each to confess*, or at least to believe the matter confessed elsewhere.

Cloniac must be arrested. He is said to have secret papers. The *casket* with hair and love-tokens must be taken from M. de Choisy.

It must be represented to the King that it is important not to say he has burned all the papers; and, in fact, it is generally believed that he has not done so.

If M. de Bouillon is taken, Italy must be provided with a General of great fidelity for several pressing reasons. One is wanted in Guyenne, another in Roussillon, it being doubtful whether M. de Turenne will serve, or whether, indeed, he ought to be left there alone. The King can see to this if he pleases.

We see the snare here indicated. M. de Cinq-Mars was the first to fall into it.

The answer is not long delayed. M. de Bouillon has been arrested. The King has consented to tell all the lies dictated to him; and as a proof of his obedience, he writes with his own hand the following letter:

Letter from the King to his Eminence.

I am always happy to see you. I am much better since yesterday; and after the capture of M. de Bouillon, which is a great stroke, I hope with the aid of God that all will go well, and that he will grant me perfect health. It is what I pray of him with all my heart.

LOUIS.

With this assurance he could act. He menaced Monsieur, and answered him vaguely. Gaston again supplicated. The same day he wrote to the King, to Cardi-

nal Mazarin, to M. des Noyers, to M. de Chavigny, and a second time to the Cardinal. Note that it was of the latter he had at first demanded pardon, the 17th of June, before supplicating the King on the 25th, following the precedent established by the Cardinal. He asks pardon from every one, and promises a full confession.

Hereupon, the Cardinal sets his foot upon the King's brother, and crushes him by the cold letter in which he counsels him to confess all. This letter is cited in this book.

Then come fresh reports from the faithful agent Chavigny, who has not sufficiently humble terms in which to address the Cardinal, whose creature he incessantly calls himself. Chavigny laughs at Monsieur and the cholera-morbus (already known, as we see) which had seized the agent of this Prince from the fear of being arrested.

He counsels Gaston to withdraw from France. We see that the King does not venture to answer until the Cardinal has *corrected* the letter he is to write.

M. de Chavigny to his Eminence.

The King spoke yesterday to M. de la Rivière *as well and as firmly as one could wish*. I have made him write down and sign all he said to him on the part of Monsieur, as your Eminence will see by the copy I send you; and when he raised some difficulties in obeying the commands of his Majesty, *his Majesty spoke to him as a master*, and he was in such fear of being arrested that he was seized with a fainting fit, and then with a species of cholera-morbus, of which he was only cured by reassuring his mind. The King was delighted that Monseigneur had no intention of seeing Monsieur. In speaking to M. de la

ALFRED DE VIGNY

Rivière, I made him fall *insensibly* into the idea of proposing to Monsieur himself to confess all betimes in a letter to the King, so that he may, after having seen his Majesty, go for a while out of the Kingdom with his Majesty's good favor and that of your Eminence.

He told me that he would make this proposition to Monseigneur, and that he would get his guarantee for the safety of Monsieur, if he would confess everything in writing and come to the King, and afterward quit France.

In this case your Eminence will be pleased to inform your *creature* if Venice would not be the best place to which Monsieur could go, and what sum you think he should have allowed him annually.

I send Monseigneur the King's reply, to be put at the foot of La Rivière's declaration, that it may be *corrected as it shall please you*, and then be placed in his hands when he shall pass.

CHAVIGNY.

MONTFRIN, the last of June, 1642.

The Cardinal permits Monsieur to leave the kingdom and to go to Venice, but fixes the pension he shall have in order to make him wiser.

Note to MM. de Chavigny and des Noyers.

I have no difficulty, if the King thinks fit, in giving my word to M. de la Rivière that if Monsieur will declare to the King all that he knows in writing, without reservations, and shall come to see his Majesty before leaving the kingdom, according to the proposition which the said Sieur de la Rivière made to us, his Majesty will let him depart freely, and keep him from harm, if he leave with the King's consent. Venice is a suitable residence, and in that case he will require the King's permission to set forth—not to return to France until it shall please the King to permit and order it.

CINQ-MARS

As to money, I think he ought to be content with what the King of Spain was to have given him; namely, ten thousand crowns a month. To give him more would be to give him the means of conspiring; and it being impossible for the King to consent that he should take with him the evil spirits who have misled him, he needs no more for himself and well-intentioned people. However, if we must go so far as four hundred thousand livres, I think we must not be stopped by so small a difference. I am entirely the friend of those who love me as you do.

THE CARDINAL DE RICHELIEU.

TARASCON, this last of June, 1642.

Either M. de la Rivière comes with a mere mouth-compliment and a confession of a disguised fault, or is charged to discover a part of what has been done. If the former, the King *ought to believe or feign to believe what he says*, and answer that he readily pardons Monsieur, and that M. de la Rivière may tell him all he has upon his conscience without being troubled about it.

If the latter, the King should still feign to believe that what Rivière says is all there is to say, and answer, "What you have just confessed surprises me, yet does not surprise me."

"It surprises me because I did not expect this new proof of lack of affection in my brother. It does not surprise me, because Monsieur le Grand, now he is taken, inquires very anxiously whether he is not charged with an understanding with Monsieur."

"Monsieur de la Rivière, I will speak to you frankly. Those who have given my brother these evil counsels must expect nothing from me but the rigor of justice. As to my brother, if he unfolds to me, without reservation, all he has done, he will find the extent of my

ALFRED DE VIGNY

goodness, as he has already at various times in the past."

Whatever entreaties La Rivière may employ to obtain a promise of general pardon, without obligation of confessing all that has passed, the King should adhere to his last reply, telling him that he himself could hardly desire to counsel him to do more than God, who requires a true repentance and unfeigned gratitude before he pardons an offence; that he ought to be satisfied with the assurance that Monsieur will find the extent of his Majesty's goodness, if he behaves as he ought to do—namely, as is above set forth.

We see here that the parts are written out word for word, and that the King is neither to add to nor take anything from them. The agent of Monsieur (La Rivière) hastens to him, and the Cardinal sends him to the King to dictate beforehand his reply. With what pliancy every personage obeys the director of this sanguinary play!

The political observers do not sleep. They excite Louis XIII by all possible means against the scapegoat upon whom every sin is to fall. The prisoner is treated with redoubled rigor.

Des Noyers writes on the 30th of June, 1642, to the Cardinal:

"The King has told me that he thinks M. le Grand capable of turning Huguenot. I added that he would have turned Turk

CINQ-MARS

if by that means he could reign, and deprive his Majesty of what God had so legitimately given him. Upon which the King said to me, 'I believe it.'

"His Majesty told me this morning that Treville had conversed with M. le Marquis on the arrival of M. le Grand at Montpellier, and that on entering the citadel he said, 'Ah! must I then die at twenty-two? Must I conspire against my country so early for a life which has been devoted to her.'"

M. des Noyers to his Eminence.

PARIS, July 1.

His Majesty is more than ever irritated against M. le Grand, for he has discovered that during his illness this wretch whom Monsieur the first President truly calls *le perfide public*, had said, speaking of the King, "He will still linger on."

Nothing is omitted that can irritate Louis XIII, though it is difficult to appreciate the point of the first President's phrase.

The same man (Des Noyers) again writes, on the 1st of July, 1642, from Pierrelatte: "His Majesty continues to give the greatest demonstrations of love for Monseigneur, and of an equal hatred for this wretched *perfide public*."

Thus the bulletin of the royal anger is sent to the Cardinal every hour, and care is taken that the fever shall not abate. The parents of the two young men wish to petition; they are prevented. M. de Chavigny writes, July 3, 1642: "The Abbé d'Effiat and the Abbé de Thou came to see the King, as we have been assured. His Majesty thought proper to send to them and command them to withdraw."

ALFRED DE VIGNY

The correspondence is urgent; the next day (July 4, 1642), the Cardinal writes from Tarascon:—

“The most obscure enigmas begin to be explained—*le perfide public* confessing, in the place where he is, *that he had ill designs against the person of M. le Cardinal, but none to which the King had not given his consent*; the mischief is that the liberty he has hitherto enjoyed, of walking twice a day, has occasioned this statement to be much spread in the province, which may produce very ill effects.”

A mortal fear agitated the Cardinal lest it should be discovered that the King had been concerned in the conspiracy; he makes the imprisonment still more strict. He adds:

“Seton, the lieutenant of the Scottish guards, sixty-six years of age, allowed M. le Grand to walk twice a day. He did so up to within these three days, which gives me reason to suppose that the former orders have been lost.

“M. de Bouillon required only a doctor and two *valets-de-chambre*; *le perfide public* has six attendants, who must be reduced. Otherwise, it is impossible *to prevent his making known whatever he pleases*; no Prince ever had more.

“You will adroitly introduce this subject, *without mentioning my name in any way*.”

Impatiently awaiting *a good commissioner*, he says:

“I expect M. de Chazé, whom we will try with M. de Thou. Make him hasten by the Rhône, for time presses, and it is necessary I should be here to assist him in his interrogations, which I will give him ready arranged.”

CINQ-MARS

As it is necessary to envenom the wound in the royal heart, he does not forget a circumstance which may have this effect.

"It were well that the faithful Marquis de Mortemar tell the King how *le perfide public* said that Fontrailles had jested upon his illness; namely, '*He is not yet bad enough.*'"

"This will tend to prove that the *perfide* and his principal confidants were ill intentioned against the King."

We see that no light word or youthful thoughtlessness, real or supposed, is omitted by political cunning. Chavigny immediately answers in the same spirit:

"The faithful Marquis has not yet had an opportunity of saying what M. le Cardinal has directed; it will be done to-morrow. We shall see what the King will say."

Then the next day the same Chavigny writes in all haste:

"Mortemar has told the King what M. le Grand said. The King did not fail, immediately upon hearing it, to repeat it to M. de Chavigny. [The same who thus sneers at Louis XIII for his docility!] And I think he is the same with M. des Noyers.

"The King expressly commanded me to mention it to your Eminence, and to say to you that he believes M. le Grand quite detestable enough to have entertained this horrible thought, and that he remembers he had at *Lyons more than fifty gentlemen dependent on him.*

"Nothing has been omitted to keep his Majesty in a good humor. The King has several times repeated that M. le Grand is the greatest liar in the world. Thus we may hope that

ALFRED DE VIGNY

this friendship is tolerably worn out in the heart of Louis XIII."

The 6th of January, 1642 (mark this rapidity), the two creatures of the Cardinal-Duke, Chavigny and Des Noyers, inform him of the result of their insinuations:

"We humbly entreat Monseigneur to tranquilize his mind, and to believe that he was never so powerful with the King as he is now; that his presence will effect all he wishes."

That same day the Cardinal-Duke writes very humbly to the King, in the tone of an innocent victim and priest, whom the king is defending:

His Eminence to the King.

"I have learned," says he, "the new discovery which the King has been pleased to make of the evil design M. le Grand had against me—against a Cardinal who for twenty-five years has, by the permission of God, successfully served his master; the greater the malice of this wretch, the more the goodness of your Majesty is apparent.

"This seventh of July, 1642."

And on the 7th he sends for M. de Thou into his chamber, bringing him from the prison of Tarascon. I have before me this curious interrogatory, and give it here, as it has been preserved, word for word. It is not superfluous to point out the tone of exquisite politeness of these two personages, neither of whom forgets the rank and character of the other, and who seem to have constantly in their minds the old adage: "One gentleman is as good as another."

CINQ-MARS

Interrogatory and replies of M. de Thou to Monseigneur the Cardinal-Duc, when sent for from the prison of the château of Tarascon. (Journal de M. le Cardinal de Richelieu, which he made during the great storm in the year 1642, and taken from the memoirs he wrote with his own hand. MDC.XLVIII.)

M. LE CARDINAL. Monsieur, I entreat you to excuse my having given you the trouble to come here.

M. DE THOU. Monseigneur, it is an honor and a pleasure.

After which the Cardinal made him sit down on a chair at his bedside.

M. LE CARDINAL. Monsieur, I entreat you to tell me the origin of these things that have just taken place.

M. DE THOU. Monseigneur, no one can know it better than your Eminence.

M. LE CARDINAL. I have no correspondence with Spain which might inform me.

M. DE THOU. The King having ordered these things, Monseigneur, it can not have been without your being made acquainted with it.

M. LE CARDINAL. Did you write to Rome and Spain?

M. DE THOU. Yes, Monseigneur, by the King's order.

M. LE CARDINAL. Are you, then, Secretary of State?

M. DE THOU. No, Monseigneur; but the King having ordered me, I could do no otherwise than obey.

M. LE CARDINAL. Have you any power?

M. DE THOU. Yes, Monseigneur, the King's word, and an order in writing.

M. LE CARDINAL. Yet Monsieur de Cinq-Mars has not said anything about it.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

M. DE THOU. He was wrong then, Monseigneur, for he received the order as well as I.

M. LE CARDINAL. Where are these orders?

M. DE THOU. They are in good hands, to be produced when they are needed.

But this is what it is desirable to avoid. The Cardinal does not wish to be assured thus that the King has given orders against him. He sends to Paris for commissioners, one especially whom he indicates, M. de Lamon, to assist M. de Chazé in the fresh interrogatories applied to this same De Thou, so imposing, so firm, so grave, so honorable, and so formidable by his virtue.

While the young magistrate is replying thus, Gaston d'Orléans, Monsieur, the King's brother, sends his confession, and throwing himself on his knees in these terms: "I, Gaston, son of France, the only brother of the King, being touched by true repentance for having again failed in the fidelity I owe to Monseigneur the King, and desiring to render myself worthy of grace and pardon—I sincerely confess everything of which I am guilty."

Then follow the accusations against M. le Grand, upon whom he nobly throws the whole affair.

A second confession accompanies the first, relating to the other offence:

Monsieur the King's brother to his Eminence.

D'AIGUEPERCE, July 7.

Gaston, etc. Unable to express sufficiently to my cousin, the Cardinal de Richelieu, my extreme grief at having entered into relations and correspondence with his enemies, I protest before

CINQ-MARS

God, and entreat M. le Cardinal to believe, that I never had any knowledge of anything that might affect your person, and that were I to die for it I would never have lent my ear or my heart to the slightest proposition against you, etc.

The politeness of terror can assuredly go no farther or lower.

But the Cardinal is content neither with these lies nor this abasement.

He sends his orders what Monsieur is to say if he wishes to be allowed to remain in the kingdom and to have wherewith to subsist.

Monsieur and M. de Cinq-Mars shall be confronted with each other.

Instructions of his Eminence.

When M. le Grand shall be brought to the place in which Monsieur is, Monsieur must say to him:

“Monsieur le Grand, although our rank is different, we are in the same difficulty, and we must have recourse to the same remedy. I confess our fault and entreat the King to pardon it.”

Either M. le Grand will take the same step, and agree with what Monsieur has said, or he will play the innocent, in which case Monsieur will say:

“You spoke to me in such a place. You told me so and so. You came to Saint Germain to me in the stables with Monsieur de Bouillon or whoever else it may have been.” Then Monsieur will relate the rest of the story.

He will do the same when M. de Bouillon shall be brought on.

He will content himself with the promise of remaining in the kingdom, without pretending to any charge or office.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

I say this, after having well considered the affair, *which may be the most important of this nature that has ever happened in this kingdom.*

But Monsieur raises great difficulties in the way of confronting the accused. He is afraid of wanting assurance before them. The King can not venture to compel his brother to appear; but it is necessary to find a subterfuge. The Chancellor Seguier devises one and despatches it.

"I have proposed to the King to send M. Talon, councillor of State and Solicitor-General, Le Bret, and Du Bignon, who are all learned in criminal matters, to confer with me upon all the propositions I shall make to him.

"Their opinion is that we can allow Monsieur to be absent at the reading of his declaration to the accused.

"This opinion is supported by precedents and reasons. As to precedents, we have the trial of La Mole and Coconnas, who were accused of high treason. In that trial the declarations of the King of Navarre, and of the Duc d'Alençon, were received and read to the accused, without confrontation, although the prisoners demanded it.

"The deposition of a witness with *infallible presumptions serves as proof and conviction* against a person accused of *high treason*, which is not the case with other crimes."

We see that the Chancellor goes to work here with good will.

Then follows the opinion given by Jacques Talon and Hierosme Bignon and Omer Talon, deciding "*that no son of France* has been heard in any trial, and that the declaration of such suffices for proof without confrontation."

CINQ-MARS

The Chancellor receives Monsieur's declaration in the company of the judges, the Sieurs de Laubardemont, Marca, de Paris, Champigny, Miraumesnil, de Chazé, and de Sève, in which the Duc Orléans confesses to *have given two signed blanks to Fontrailles to treat with the King of Spain*, at the instigation of M. le Grand, whom he charges also with having seduced M. de Bouillon.

According to these opinions, the Cardinal is armed on every side and sure of success. He may go. He arrives at Paris; and while at Lyons they are trying Cinq-Mars and De Thou, he places his hand upon the King, and pardons Monsieur on condition of his political nullity, and M. de Bouillon in exchange for his fortress of Sedan.

The indictment is very curious, but too extensive to be inserted here. It is found at the end of the interrogations. The reporter there accuses M. de Cinq-Mars, after having passed lightly over Monsieur and the Duc de Bouillon.

"As to M. le Grand, he is accused not only of being an accomplice in this conspiracy, but also of being its author and promoter.

"M. le Grand poisons the mind of Monsieur by imaginary fears invented by himself. That is a crime.

"To relieve him from his terrors, *he persuades him* to make a party in the State. Here are two crimes.

"*He persuades him* to combine with Spain. This is a third.

"*He persuades him* to destroy M. le Cardinal, and *drive him from affairs*. This is a fourth.

"*He persuades him* to make war with France during the siege

ALFRED DE VIGNY

of Perpignan, in order to interrupt the happiness of this State. This is a fifth.

"He himself draws up the treaty of Spain. This is a sixth.

"He brings Fontrailles to Monsieur to be sent about the treaty, and to Monsieur, the Comte d'Aubigny. The results *may be looked upon* as a seventh crime, or at least the accomplishment of all the rest.

"All of them are crimes of high treason, he who attacks the persons of the king's ministers being reputed by the ancient laws and constitutions of the emperors *equally* guilty with *those who attack the persons of the kings themselves*.

"A minister serves his Prince and the State. A man deprives the Prince and the State of him. This is the same as if they were to deprive the first of an arm, and the second of a part of its power."

I refer these arguments to the criticisms of political students. They may think, perhaps, that there might have been something to say in reply to them, were it considered possible to answer these absurdities of uncontrolled power. The grand fact of the Spanish treaty sufficed; and I only transcribe what the reporter adds, to show the animosity which was prescribed for him toward the enemy, the rival for favor of the first minister.*

If M. de Cinq-Mars had been less ardent, less haughty, and more able, he ought not to have placed himself in the wrong by a treaty with foreigners. He might have overthrown the aged minister at less cost, and without

* There are few words as involuntarily and cruelly comical as those which he so often repeats: "He persuaded him to," etc. Monsieur is thus represented as a schoolboy under the age of reason and not responsible, whom a tutor corrects in some trifling errors. Preceptor of *twenty-two!* pupil of *thirty-four!* cruel witticism!

CINQ-MARS

incurring the charge of allying himself with foreigners, a charge detested by monarchical or republican nations, alike by that of the Constable de Bourbon and of Coriolanus. But he was twenty-two years old, and his head was not used to great affairs. He acted hastily, prompted by passion, against a man of experience, who knew how to wait coldly for circumstances which would place his enemy in a false position.

Upon the Secret Interrogatory.

(Extracted from the Registers.)

“M. de Cinq-Mars avowed to M. le Chancelier that the strongest motive which had led him to act as he did was the desire to drive M. le Cardinal from State affairs, for whom he had an aversion which he could neither overcome nor moderate.

“He said that six things had given him this aversion:

“1. The first, that after the siege of Arras, at the close of which he had been present, M. le Cardinal had spoken of him as of a person who had not much courage.

“2. That after the alliance of M. le Marquis de Sourdis and his brother, the Cardinal had said that M. de Sourdis had done honor to his family.

“3. That having desired to be created duke and peer, M. le Cardinal had persuaded the King from it.

“4. That he had felt himself obliged to protect M. l'Archevêque de Bordeaux, whom he thought they desired to ruin.

“5. *That, speaking to him of the Princesse Marie, he said that his mother wished to marry him to her.* His Eminence said that his mother, Madame d'Effiat, *was mad, and that if the Princesse Marie entertained the idea, she was more mad still;* that having been proposed as the wife of Monsieur, he (Cinq-Mars) would be vain and presumptuous to pretend to her; that it would be ridiculous.

“6. That the Cardinal had objected to the King admitting him to the council, and had him expelled from it.”

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“‘HE WAS BORNE,’ SAYS AN ANCIENT MANUSCRIPT JOURNAL,’’ ETC.

“His boat touched the shore at the Balme Bonneri. In this town, where many of the nobility awaited him, among others M. le Comte de Suze, Monseigneur de Viviers, saluted him as he left his boat; but he was obliged to delay speaking to him until he had reached the lodging which had been prepared for him in the town. When his boat came to the shore, a wooden bridge was placed from the boat to the land. After it had been ascertained to be safe, they brought out the bed in which the said lord was reclining, for he was ill with an ulcer in his arm. Six powerful men carried the litter upon two poles, and the holders in which the men placed their hands were covered with buff leather. They wore on the shoulders and around the neck certain straps lined with cotton, with buff leather handles, which sustained the bars passed through them. In this manner these men carried the bed and the said lord through the towns to the houses where he was to lodge. But that which astonished every one was that he entered the houses by the windows; for before he arrived, the masons whom he brought with him took out the windows of the houses, or made openings in the walls of the chambers in which he was to lodge, and then made a wooden bridge which ascended from the street to the window or openings of his lodging. Thus, in his portable bed, he passed through the streets, and along the bridge into another bed prepared for him in his chamber, which his officers had hung with scarlet and violet damask, and rich furniture. At Viviers he lodged in the house of Montargny, of the university of our church. They took out the window of the chamber which looks over the square; and the wooden bridge to ascend to it reached from the shop of Noël de Vielh, in the house of Ales on the north side, to the window into which the lord Cardinal was carried in the manner aforesaid. His chamber was guarded on every side—under the window, and at the sides, and on the roof.

CINQ-MARS

“His court or suite was composed of people of importance. Civility, affability, and courtesy went with them. The devotion with them was very great. The soldiers, who are generally indevout and impious, practised great devotions. The day after his arrival, Sunday, several of them confessed and communicated with demonstration of great piety. They committed no insolences in the town, living quite like young girls. The nobility, too, practised great devotion. When they were on the Rhône, although there were many boatmen, as well with the boats as with the horses, no one dared to blaspheme. It was quite miraculous how such men could exhibit such control over themselves. They were never heard to utter any words but those which were necessary for the management of their barks, and these so modestly that every one was enchanted.

“Monseigneur le Cardinal Bigni lodged at the archdeacon’s. The house of M. Panisse had been prepared for Monseigneur le Cardinal Mazarin; but on leaving St. Andeol, he took post to go to the King. Sunday the twenty-fifth, the said lord was carried back to his boat in the same order.”

LAST MOMENTS OF MM. DE CINQ-MARS AND DE THOU.

The bravery of M. de Cinq-Mars was bold, noble, and elegant. None better has been attested. If after so many historical details sketched in this work, new proofs were wanting, we should add, to confirm them, the letter (see page 232) from M. de Marca, and fragments of the report which follows, where we remark this passage: “It is an almost incredible wonder that he displayed no fear, trouble, or emotion,” etc.

The collection, entitled “Journal de M. le Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu qu’il a faict durant le grand orage de la court, en l’année 1642, tiré de ses Mémoires qu’il a

ALFRED DE VIGNY

escrit de sa main," adds these words to the indictment: "M. de Cinq-Mars never changed countenance or tone—always the same sweetness, moderation, and confidence."

Tallemant des Réaux says, in his *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 418, etc.:

"M. le Grand was firm; and the internal combat he suffered did not appear on his countenance. He died with an astonishing grandeur of courage, and did not condescend to harangue the people. He would not have his eyes blindfolded. His eyes were open when he was struck, and he held the stake so firmly that it was with great difficulty they removed his arms. He was full of courage, and died like a gentleman. Although they had resolved not to subject him to the question, as the sentence purported, they, however, showed him the rack. This touched him, but did not induce him to forget his courageous mien; and he was already taking off his *pourpoint*, for, as he supposed, the torture, when they merely made him raise his hand to affirm the truth."

Several accounts add that when conducted to the torture-chamber he exclaimed: "Whither are you leading me? How disagreeable the scent is here!" raising his handkerchief to his nose. This disdain appears to be one of those touches of *bravure moqueuse* in which this history abounds.

Fragment of a letter from M. de Marca, Councillor of State, to M. de Brienne, Secretary of State, describing what passed at the trial of MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.

SIR: I thought you might be pleased to be informed of the principal things which passed at the sentence which has been

CINQ-MARS

pronounced against MM. le Grand and de Thou. I have, therefore, taken the liberty to narrate it to you in the present letter. M. le Chancelier commenced with the deposition of M. le Duc d'Orléans, which he received in judicial form at Ville Franche in Beau-Jolois, where Monsieur then was, and which was read to Monsieur in the presence of seven commissioners, who assisted M. le Chancelier. In this he declared that M. le Grand had solicited him to unite with him, and with M. de Bouillon, and to treat with Spain, which they all three resolved upon in the Hôtel de Venise, in the Faubourg St.-Germain, about last New Year's day.

Fontrailles was selected to proceed to Madrid, where he drew up the treaty with the Count-Duke, by which the King of Spain promised to furnish twelve thousand foot and five thousand horse, tried troops, forty thousand crowns to Monsieur to raise new levies, etc. . . .

The knowledge of the treaty, without having revealed it, added to the proofs which are in the process, of intervention for the union of the accomplices, and the space of six weeks or more which M. de Thou passed with M. le Grand, lodging in his house near Perpignan, counselling him in his affairs, after the knowledge that the said Sieur le Grand had treated with Spain, and therefore that he was guilty of the crime of high treason. All this combined to make the judges condemn De Thou, according to the laws of the ordinance expressly made and provided against those who have been acquainted with conspiracy against the State, and have not revealed it, even though their silence had not been accompanied by the many other circumstances observable in the case of the said Sire de Thou. *He died in a truly Christian manner, and as a man of courage, meriting a special description. M. le Grand also displayed a firmness always equal, and firmly reconciled to death, with an admirable coolness and Christian constancy and devotion.* I entreat your permission to quit this mournful subject, to assure you that I continue in the respect, etc. MARCA.

LYONS, this 16th September, 1642.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

After the letter of M. de Marca, there was printed, in 1645, a journal, which has lately been attributed on no very clear grounds to a recorder of the city of Lyons. This report was greatly diffused at the time, and published, as we see, *one hundred and eighty-two years ago*. A portion of these details was reproduced in 1826 by the author of this work, who cited it; and its principal features are scattered in the course of the composition. However, some of these facts, for which there was no room, were designedly left out, and have been omitted in the reprints which have been made of this report. It will not be profitless to reproduce them here. They complete the portraits of the characters of this work, and show that the author has been religiously faithful to history, and has not allowed his imagination to go beyond the circle traced by truth.

“We have seen the favorite of the greatest and most just of kings lay his head upon the scaffold at the age of twenty-two, but with a firmness which can hardly be paralleled in our history. We have seen a Councillor of State die like a saint for a crime which men can not justly pardon. There is no one in the world who, knowing their conspiracy against the State, would not consider them deserving of death; and there are few people, who, knowing their condition and their noble natural qualities, would not pity their misfortune.

“M. de Cinq-Mars arrived at Lyons, September the fourth of this present year, 1642, at two o'clock in the afternoon, in a coach drawn by four horses, in which were *gardes du corps*, with their muskets in their hands, and surrounded by foot-guards to the number of a hundred, belonging to M. le Cardinal-Duc; before them marched two hundred cavalry, most of them Catalonians, and following them were three hundred others, well mounted.

CINQ-MARS

“M. le Grand was dressed in dark-colored Holland cloth, covered with gold lace, and a scarlet mantle with large silver buttons; he being upon the Pont du Rosne, before entering the town, asked M. Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scottish guards, if he would allow the door of the coach to be shut—which was refused him, and he was conducted over the Pont St. Jean, and thence, by the Rue de Flandre, to the foot of the château of Pierre-Encise, showing himself while passing through the streets continually at one or the other door, saluting the people with a cheerful countenance, leaning half out of the carriage, and even recognizing many persons, whom he saluted by their names.

“Arrived at Pierre-Encise, he was surprised when they told him he must alight, and get on horseback outside the town, to reach the castle.

“‘This is, then, the last ride I shall take,’ said he; for he had imagined that he was to go to the wood of Vincennes, and he had often asked the guards whether they would allow him to hunt when he should be there.

“His prison was at the foot of the great tower of the castle, which had no other view than two little windows, which looked into a small garden, at the foot of which were guards. M. Seyton slept with four guards in the antechamber, and there were guards at all the doors.

“M. le Cardinal Bichy went to visit him the next day, and asked whether he should like them to send some one with whom he might amuse himself in his prison. He replied that he should be very glad, but that he did not deserve any one should take the trouble.

“Consequently, M. le Cardinal de Lyons sent for the Père Malavalette, Jesuit, whom he commissioned to visit him, since he desired it; which he did on the 6th, at five in the morning, remaining with him until eight o’clock. He found him in a red damask bed, very uncomfortable, which made him pale and weak. The good father knew so well how to please him that he asked for him again in the evening; and so he continued to visit him, morning and evening, the whole time of his imprison-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

ment. And he afterward made a report to MM. le Cardinal-Duc and le Cardinal de Lyons, and to M. le Chancelier, of all that he had said; and this same father had a long conference with his ducal Eminence, although the latter gave audience to no one at the time.

“On the 7th, M. le Chancelier went to visit M. de Cinq-Mars, and treated him very civilly, telling him that he had no reason to fear, but, on the contrary, to hope everything that was to his advantage; that he well knew he had to deal with a good judge, who would assuredly not forget the favors he had received from *his benefactor*; that he well knew that it was through his goodness and power that the King had not deprived him of his charge; that this favor was so great that it not only merited an enduring remembrance, but also eternal gratitude; and that this was one of the occasions on which to show his gratitude. The apparent reason for these professions was that M. le Grand had once softened the King, who was greatly enraged against M. le Chancelier; but the true reason was the fear that M. de Cinq-Mars might refuse to have him for judge, and appeal to the Parliament of Paris, *in order that he might be delivered by the people, who loved him passionately.*

“M. le Grand replied that this courtesy filled him with shame and confusion. ‘But, however,’ said he, ‘I see clearly, by the manner in which they are proceeding in this affair, that they are determined to have my life. *It is all over with me; the King has abandoned me. I look upon myself as a victim whom they are about to sacrifice to the passions of my enemies and the King’s weakness.*’ To which M. le Chancelier replied that these sentiments were not just, and that his experience was quite to the contrary. ‘May God grant it be so!’ said M. le Grand; ‘but I can not believe it.’

“On the 8th, M. le Chancelier went to hear him, accompanied by six masters of requests, two presidents, and six counsellors of Grenoble, who, having questioned him from six in the morning to two in the afternoon, could get nothing from him to make out the case.”

CINQ-MARS

This report, which, as has been said, was printed at the end of the letter of M. de Marca, has also this curious anecdote, which attests the incredible firmness of mind of M. de Thou :

“After his confession, he was visited by Father Jean Terrasse, of the Convent of the Observance de Saint François at Tarascon, who had visited and consoled him during his imprisonment at Tarascon. He was glad to see him, and walked with him some time, holding a spiritual conversation. This father came in connection with a vow which M. de Thou had made at Tarascon, which was, should he be delivered, to found a chapel of three hundred livres annual rent in the church of the Pères Cordeliers of this town of Tarascon. He gave orders for this foundation, desiring to acquit himself of his vow, since God, he said, was about to deliver him, not only from a prison of stone, but also from the prison of his body. He asked for ink and paper, and wrote this beautiful inscription, which he directed to be placed in this chapel:

Christo liberatori,
votum in carcere pro libertate
conceptum.

Fran. August. Thuanus
e carcere vitæ jamjam
liberandus merito solvit.

XII Septemb. M.D.C.XLII.
confitebor tibi, Domine, quoniam
exaudisti me, et factus es mihi
in salutem.

“In this inscription we must admire the readiness and clearness of his mind; and it will make those who consider it acknowledge that the fear of death had not the power to cause him any

ALFRED DE VIGNY

agitation of mind. He begged M. Thomé to give his compliments to the Cardinal de Lyons, and to inform him that, had it pleased God to deliver him from this peril, he had designed to quit the world and to give himself up entirely to the service of God.

“He wrote two letters, which were taken open to M. le Chancelier, and then placed in the hands of his confessor to read them; these letters being sealed, he said, ‘There are my last thoughts for the world; let us depart for Paradise.’ And from that time he continued without interruption his spiritual discourses, and confessed a second time. He asked at intervals whether the time for the execution approached, when they were to be bound, and begged that they would inform him when the executor of justice was there, that he might embrace him; but he only saw him on the scaffold.”

The paraphrase made by M. de Thou.

Father Montbrun, M. de Thou’s confessor, is quoted in this report, and gives these details:

“M. de Thou, kneeling on the scaffold, also recited the one hundred and fifteenth Psalm, and paraphrased it in French nearly all through, in a firm voice and with vigorous action, with great fervor mingled with a holy joy, incredible to those who did not witness it. This is the paraphrase he made, which I would fain accompany with the action which he applied to it. I have endeavored to retain his own words:

“‘*Credidi, propter quod locutus sum.* My God, *credidi!*—I have believed, and I believe firmly, that you are my Creator and my gracious Father; that you suffered for me; that you redeemed me with your most precious blood; that you have opened Paradise for me. *Credidi*—I ask of you, my God, one grain, one little grain of that living faith which inflamed the hearts of the first Christians. *Credidi, propter quod locutus sum*—grant, O my God, that I may not speak to you with my lips only, but

CINQ-MARS

that my heart may respond to my words, and my will not belie my mouth! *Credidi*—my God, my tongue adores you not; I have not sufficient eloquence. But I adore you in spirit—yes, in spirit. My God, I adore in spirit and in truth! Yes, *credidi*, I have confided in you, my God, and I have abandoned myself to your mercy, after the many favors you have granted me. *Propter quod locutus sum*—and in this confidence I have spoken, I have said all, I have accused myself.

“*Ego autem humiliatus nimis*. It is true, Lord, that I am humbled exceedingly, but still not so much so as I deserve. *Ego dixi in excessu meo. Omnis homo mendax*. Ah, how true it is that the whole world is but falsehood, folly, and vanity! Ah, how true it is! *Omnis homo mendax! Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi*. [He repeated this with great vehemence.] *Calicem salutis accipiam*. My father, we must drink this chalice of death courageously. Yes, I receive it willingly, and am ready to drink it to the dregs.

“*Et nomen Domini invocabo*. You will aid me,’ he said, turning to me, ‘my father, to implore the divine assistance, that it may please God to fortify my weakness, and to give me the courage I need to drink the cup which God in his goodness has prepared for my salvation.’

“He passed over the two following verses of the Psalm, and exclaimed in a loud and animated voice, ‘*Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea!* O my God, you have done a great thing for me!—you have broken the ties which bound me so strongly to the world! It needed a divine power to disengage me from them. *Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea!* [These are the exact words he uttered here.] Those who have brought me here have done me a great service. What obligations do I not owe them! Yes, they have done me a great good, since they have taken me from this world to place me in heaven!’

“Here I reminded him that he must pardon everything, and have no resentment against them. At this word he turned toward me, still on his knees as he was, and with a graceful action. ‘What, my father, say you of resentment? Ah, God knows,

ALFRED DE VIGNY

God is my witness that I love them with my whole heart, and that in my heart there is no animosity toward any one in the world! *Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea, tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis.* Behold the host, Lord [pointing to himself], behold the host which is now to be sacrificed to you. *Tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et nomen Domini invocabo. Vota mea, Domine, reddam* [stretching out his arms and looking round with an agreeable movement, and a cheerful and radiant countenance] *in conspectu omnis populi ejus.* Yes, Lord, I will render up to you my wishes, my spirit, my heart, my soul, my life, *in conspectu omnis populi ejus*—before all this people, in the sight of this assembly! *In atriis domus Domini, in medio tuo, Jerusalem. In atriis domus Domini.* We are here at the entrance of the Lord; yes, it is from hence, it is from Lyons—from Lyons that we shall mount above [raising his arms toward heaven]. Lyons, I owe thee more gratitude than to my birthplace, which only bestowed upon me a miserable life, while thou givest me this day an eternal life! *in medio tuo, Jerusalem.* Nay, truly, I am too eager for this death. Is it not wrong, my father?’ he said in a lower tone, smiling, and turning toward me. ‘I am too happy! Is there not vanity in this? I would not have it so.’ ”

Details of the Execution of M. de Cinq-Mars.

(From the same Report.)

“It is an almost incredible wonder that he displayed no fear, trouble, or emotion, but appeared always gay, assured, unalterable, and showed so much firmness of spirit that all those who saw him are still astonished at it.

“M. de Cinq-Mars, without having his eyes bandaged, laid his neck upon the block very properly, holding his face straight out toward the front of the scaffold; and, tightly embracing the stake with his arms, he closed his eyes and mouth, awaiting the blow which the executioner gave him, deliberately and heavily, standing on his left, and holding his axe in both hands. Upon receiving the blow, he sent forth a loud cry, ‘Ah!’ which was

CINQ-MARS

stifled in his blood. He raised his knees above the block, as if about to rise, and then subsided into the position in which he was before. The head, not being entirely separated from the body by the blow, the executioner passed behind to the right; and taking the head by the hair with his right hand, with the left he sawed off part of the tracheal artery, and the skin of the neck which was not cut through, and then threw the head on the scaffold, whence it bounded to the ground, *where it was remarked that it still made half a turn more and palpitated for some time.* The face was turned toward the nuns of St. Pierre, and the crown of the head toward the scaffold, with the eyes open. His body remained firm against the block, which he still embraced, until the executioner dragged it away to strip it, which he did, and then covered it with a cloth, and threw his cloak over it. The head, having been placed upon the scaffold, was laid with the body under the same cloth.

The execution of M. de Thou, like that of M. de Cinq-Mars, resembles an assassination. We give the account of it from the same journal, more horribly minute than in the letter from Montrésor:

“The executioner came to cover his eyes with the handkerchief; but he did it badly, placing the corners of the handkerchief so that they covered his mouth. He raised it, and arranged it better. He adored the crucifix before setting his neck upon the block. He kissed the blood of Cinq-Mars, which had remained there. Then he laid his neck firmly upon the block, which a Jesuit brother had wiped with his handkerchief, because it was wet with blood, and asked this brother whether he was well placed, who told him to advance his head somewhat farther, which he did. At the same time, the executioner, perceiving that the strings of his shirt were not untied, and that they tightened his throat, put his hand to the collar to unfasten them. Feeling this, he asked, ‘What is it? Must I take off my shirt?’

ALFRED DE VIGNY

and already began to do so. They answered, 'No, you must merely untie the strings,' which having done, he turned down his shirt-collar, and laid bare his neck and shoulders; and having again placed his neck upon the block, he pronounced his last words, which were, '*Maria, mater gratiæ, mater misericordiæ, in manus tuas!*' And then his arms began to tremble, awaiting the blow, which was struck high in the neck too near the head, by which blow his neck was cut only half through. The body fell on the left side of the block on its back, the face turned toward heaven, moving the legs, and feebly raising the hands. The executioner wanted to turn him over, to finish as he had begun; but, terrified by the cries which were raised against him, he struck him two or three blows upon the throat, and thus severed his head, which remained on the scaffold.

"The executioner, having stripped him, carried his body, covered with a cloth, to the carriage which had brought them, where he also placed that of M. de Cinq-Mars, and their heads, which both had the eyes still open, especially that of M. de Thou, which appeared alive. Thence they were taken to the Feuillants, where M. de Cinq-Mars was interred before the high altar under the balustrade of the said church, through the goodness and authority of M. du Gay—the treasurer of France in the district of Lyons. M. de Thou was embalmed by the care of his sister, and placed in a leaden coffin to be carried to the family vault.

"Such was the end of these two persons, who certainly merited to leave to posterity other memory than that of their death. I leave every person to form his own judgment of them, and content myself with pointing out that it is a great lesson for us of the inconstancy of the things of this world and the frailty of our nature."

The last wills of these two noble young men have come down to us in the letters which they wrote after their sentence was pronounced. That of M. de Cinq-Mars to the Maréchale d'Effiat, his mother, may ap-

CINQ-MARS

pear cold to some persons, from the difficulty they may experience in transporting themselves to that epoch, when in the most serious circumstances people sought rather to repress their emotions than to express them with warmth, and in which great people, in their writings and conversation, avoided the *pathetic* as much as we cultivate it.

Letter of M. le Grand to his mother the Maréchale d'Effiat.

MADAME, MY DEAREST AND HIGHLY HONORED MOTHER: I write to you, since I am not permitted to see you, to entreat you, Madame, to give me two last marks of your goodness—the first, Madame, that you will give to my soul as many prayers as possible for my salvation; the other, that you obtain from the King the money I expended in my office of master of the horse, and which was owing to me otherwise in respect of it, before it was taken from me; and if this favor be not granted, that you will have the generosity to pay my creditors. All matters of this world are of such trifling interest that you can not refuse me this last request, which I make for the repose of my soul. Believe me, Madame, in this, should your own sentiment be opposed to my wish, since I, whose every step conducts me to a near death, am more capable than yourself of judging the value of the things of this world. Adieu, Madame; forgive me if I have ever failed in my respect toward you during my lifetime, and rest assured that I die,

My beloved and much honored mother, your very humble,
very obedient, and very obliged son and servant,

HENRI D'EFFIAT DE CINQ-MARS.

The original manuscript is in the Royal Library at Paris,* written in a firm and calm hand.

* MS. No. 9327.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

The last letter of François Auguste de Thou.

We have seen that, left alone in his prison, M. de Thou wrote a letter which was given to his confessor. "Here," said he, "is the last thought I shall have for this world." We have seen the efforts he made to detach himself from this last thought, and the fervent prayers he repeated. Striking his breast, he prays God to have mercy upon him; he rejects the world; he already envelops himself in his shroud. This last thought was the most cruel that can tear the heart of man. It was a last look toward a beloved woman; it was an adieu to his mistress, the Princesse de Gueménée. Its tone is grave, and the respect for rank is not neglected any more than that of his own personal dignity, and the solemn moment which approaches. I have recently found this precious letter.* It runs thus:

MADAME: I have never felt under an obligation to you during my whole life until this moment, when about to leave it; I lose it with the less regret that you have rendered it *unhappy* to me. I hope that the life of the other world will be very different for me from this, and that I shall find there happiness as much above the imagination of man as it should be above his hope; mine, Madame, is founded only on the goodness of God and the merits of the passion of his Son, alone capable of effacing my sins, for which I am answerable to his justice, and which are of such excess that nothing but his mercy can exceed them. I entreat your pardon, Madame, with my whole heart for all I may have done which may have displeased you, and I make the same prayer to all *the persons whom I have hated for your sake*, protesting to you, Madame, that as far as the fidelity I

* Biblioth. Royale de Paris, MS. No. 9276, p. 233.

CINQ-MARS

owe to my God will allow it, I die, Madame, *too assuredly*, your
very humble and very obedient servant, DE THOU.

LYONS, this 12th September, 1642.

The life of Madame la Princesse de Gueménée scarcely permits us to think that it was her severity that caused such sorrow, such profound grief. Tallemant des Réaux says in several places that M. de Thou was her lover. "*They say*," he adds (tom. i., p. 418), "*that he wrote to her after his condemnation!*" It is this letter which we have just read. It appears to be written by a man like the misanthrope of Molière, but with more piety; "*all the persons whom I have hated for your sake*" painfully resembles

"C'est que tout l'univers est bien reçu de vous."

UPON NON-DISCLOSURE.

The life of every celebrated man has one sole and precise meaning, visible at first glance to those who can judge the great events of the past, and which, we trust, has remained in the minds of those who have attentively read "Cinq-Mars." The blood of François Auguste de Thou flowed in the name of a sacred idea, and which will remain such so long as the religion of honor shall exist among us; it is the *impossibility of denunciation from the lips of the man of honor*.

Statesmen of every age who have endeavored to introduce denunciation have hitherto completely failed, to the glory of our country. The fact that it was Louis XI, whose character was baseness itself, and his genius treachery, who first attempted this enterprise, is in itself

ALFRED DE VIGNY

a stain upon it; but this tree of evil, which he planted at Plessis-les-Tours, did not bring forth its poisonous fruit, and no one was found to denounce a citizen,

“Et, sa tête à la main, demander son salaire.”

The reward was, however, set forth in the edict of Louis XI, dated the *twenty-second day of December, one thousand four hundred and seventy-seven*: an edict easy to comprehend in such a monarch at the moment when the Comte de la Marche, Jacques d'Armagnac, had just had his head cut off for high treason, and his lands, an immense property, impudently distributed among his judges—a monstrous inheritance, unheard of since the days of Tiberius and Nero—and which was accomplishing, while they forced the children of the condemned to receive, drop by drop, upon their foreheads the blood of their father from the scaffold above. After this fine stroke, he might go on, and imagine he had a right so to despise France as to cast at her such an edict and to propose to her new infamies. Accustomed as he was to make a perpetual traffic in consciences for ready money, never making a step without a purse in one hand and an axe in the other, he followed the old maxim, which is no great effort of genius, and which Machiavel has so highly praised—to place men between hope and fear.

Louis XI indeed played his game subtly; but at last France arose and nobly played hers, showing him that she had other men than his barber. Despite the word of his invention, for we must honorably give it him, despite the softened translation of *denunciation*

into *revelation*, no one person deliberately left his own house to go and repeat a secret which in the openness of friendship had escaped another at the table or fire-side. The vile ordinance was forgotten until the time when the Cardinal de Richelieu ordered its resurrection. M. de Thou had no stronghold to give in exchange for his pardon, like M. de Bouillon, and his death would add to the terror inspired by that of Cinq-Mars. If he had been pardoned, he would have been a young and virtuous censor; destined to survive the old minister, he would perhaps, like his father, be an historian, and write the life of the Cardinal; and would be a judge in his turn—an inflexible judge, indignant at the death of his friend, M. le Grand. M. de Richelieu thought of all this; and these reasons, which do not escape me, would not escape him. For the sake of mere impartiality, let us forget his angry quip about the President de Thou: “He put my name in his history; I’ll place his in mine.” Acquit him of vengeance, there still remains an inflexible hardness of heart, profound bad faith, and the most immoral egoism.* The virtuous life of M. de Thou, which might become useful to a State where everything was becoming corrupt, was disagreeable and dangerous to the minister. He did not hesitate; let us not hesitate, then, to judge this justice. We must by all means ascertain the grounds of these celebrated

* Dupuy has it in his *Memoirs* that when the exempt brought him the letter from the Chancellor which announced the sentence,—

“And M. de Thou also!” said the Cardinal, with an air of satisfaction. “M. le Chancelier has delivered me from a great burden. But Picart, they have no executioner there.” We see he thought of everything.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

State reasons, which have been converted by some into a kind of holy ark not to be touched. Bad actions leave us the germ of bad laws, and there is no passing minister who does not seek to plant them, to preserve the source of his borrowed power, through love for this doubtful *éclat*. One thing may, however, reassure us, that when such an idea is hatched in the brain of a political person, the gestation is long and painful, the birth would probably prove the death of the parent, and the failure a clear public happiness.

As nothing more inspires sound replies, or presents them in clearer expressions than imminent danger to a superior man, I see that from the first M. de Thou went to the bottom of the question of right and possibility with his reason, and to the bottom of the question of sentiment and honor with his noble heart. Let us listen to him:

"The day of his confrontation with M. de Cinq-Mars, he said* that after having deeply communed with himself whether he ought to declare to the King [seeing him every day at the camp of Perpignan] the knowledge he had of this treaty, he resolved for several reasons not to mention it:

"1. He must have accused Monsieur, the King's brother, of a State crime, and M. de Bouillon and M. le Grand, *who were all much more powerful* and more accredited than he, and that it was certain he would succumb in this action, of which he had no verifying proof. 'I could not have cited,' says he, 'the testimony of Fontrailles, who was absent; and M. le Grand would perhaps have denied then that he had spoken to me of it. I should have then passed for a calumniator, and my honor, which

* See the interrogation and confrontation (Sept. 12, 1642). Journal of of M. le Cardinal-Duc, written with his own hand (p. 190).

CINQ-MARS

will ever be dearer to me than my life, would have been irreparably lost.'

"2. 'As to M. le Grand,' he adds those words which have been already quoted, and which possess an incomparable beauty in their antique, I might almost say, evangelic, simplicity, 'he held me to be his only and faithful friend, and I would not betray him.' "

Whatever may be the secret enterprise assumed—whether against a crowned head or against the constitution of a democratic State, or against the bodies which represent a nation; whatever may be the nature of the execution or the plot—whether assassination, or expulsion by armed force, or insurrection of the people, or corruption and revolt of the paid soldiery—the situation will be the same between the conspirator and him who has received his confidence. His first thought will be the irreparable and eternal loss of his honor and his name, either as calumniator, if he furnishes no proofs, or as a base informer if he gives them, punished in the first case by ignominious penalties, punished in the second by the public detestation, which points him out with the finger as stained with the blood of his friends.

When M. de Thou deigned to explain this first cause of silence, it seems that it was in order to place himself on a level with the minds which judged him, and in order to enter into the general tone of the trial, and the precise terms of the laws, that ever assume themselves made only for the basest souls, which they circumscribe and press upon by gross barriers, and an inexorable and uniform necessity. He demonstrated that

ALFRED DE VIGNY

he could not have been an informer, even had he wished it. He implies, "If I had been infamous, I could not have accomplished my infamy; no one would have believed me." But after these few words upon the physical impossibility, he adds the motive of the moral impossibility—a genuine motive, and one of an immutable, eternal verity, which all religions have recognized and sanctified, which all nations have held in honor—"He held me to be his friend."

Not only did he not betray him, but it will be observed that in all his interrogatories and confrontations with M. de Bouillon and M. de Cinq-Mars, he names and compromises no one.*

"As soon as I was alone with M. de Thou," says Fontrailles, in his Memoirs, "he told me of the journey I had just made into Spain, which much surprised me, for I believed that it had been concealed from him, in conformity with the deliberation which had been taken on the subject. When I asked him how he had learned it, he declared to me very frankly in confidence that he knew it from the Queen, and that she had it from Monsieur.

"I was not ignorant that her Majesty had greatly desired a cabal to be got up, and had contributed to it with all her power."†

M. de Thou might, then, have supported himself upon this authority; but he knows that he shall thus cause Queen Anne of Austria to be persecuted, and he is silent. He is also silent concerning the King himself, and does not deign to repeat what he said to the Car-

* See the interrogatory and *procès-verbal*, prepared by M. le Chancelier, etc., 1642.

† Narrative of M. de Fontrailles.

CINQ-MARS

dinal in his private interview. He will not receive his life at this price.

As to M. de Cinq-Mars, he has but one reason to give—"He held me to be his friend." Even had he, instead of being a proved friend, been merely a man connected with M. de Cinq-Mars by transient relations, *he held him to be his friend*, he had faith in him, *and he would not betray him*. Everything is in that.

LAURETTE

LAURETTE

THE ENCOUNTER



THE road from Artois to Flanders is long and desolate. It extends in a straight line, with neither trees nor ditches along its sides, over flat plains, covered at all times with yellowish clay. In the month of March, 1815, as I was travelling along this road, I had an adventure I never have forgotten.

Alone I rode on horseback, had a good cloak, a black helmet, pistols, and a heavy sword. It had been raining heavily four days and four nights of my journey, and I remember that I sang "Joconde" at the top of my voice—I was young. The body-guard of the king, in 1814, was filled with old men and boys; the empire apparently had seized and killed off all the men.

My comrades were on the road, somewhat in advance, escorting Louis XVIII; I saw their white cloaks and red coats on the rim of the northern horizon. The lancers of Bonaparte, who closely watched and followed our retreat, showed from time to time the tricolored pennons of their long lances on the opposite horizon.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

A lost shoe had somewhat hindered my horse; but he was young and strong, and I spurred him on to rejoin the squadron. He set off on a quick trot; I put my hand to my belt—found it well furnished with gold; heard the iron scabbard of my sword clang upon my stirrup, and felt very proud and perfectly happy.

It rained on, and I sang on. However, I soon ceased, tired of hearing nobody but myself, and I then heard only the rain and the feet of my horse as they plashed in the ruts. The pavement of the road gave way; I sank down; and was obliged to have recourse to my feet. My high cavalry boots were covered on the outside with a crust of mud, yellow as ochre, and inside they were fast filling with water. I looked at my new epaulettes, my happiness and my consolation—they were ruined by the rain. That was no slight affliction!

My horse hung his head, and I did the same. I began to reflect, and for the first time asked myself where I was going. I knew absolutely nothing about it; but that did not trouble me long; I knew that my squadron was there, and there, too, was my duty. As I felt in my heart a profound and imperturbable tranquillity, I thanked that ineffable feeling of *duty*, and tried to explain it to myself. Seeing every day how gayly the most unaccustomed fatigues were borne by heads so fair or so white, how cavalierly a well-assured future was risked by men of a worldly and happy life, and taking my own share in that wonderful satisfaction which every man derives from the conviction that he

LAURETTE

can not evade any of the obligations of honor, I saw clearly that *self-abnegation* was a far easier and more common thing than is generally imagined.

I asked whether this abnegation was not an innate sentiment? What was this need of obeying, and of placing one's freedom of will in the hands of others, as a heavy and troublesome burden? Whence came the secret pleasure of being rid of this burden and why the pride of man never revolted at this? I perceived this mysterious instinct binding together, on every side, families and nations into masses powerful in their combination; but I nowhere saw the renunciation of one's own actions, words, wishes, and almost thoughts, so complete and formidable as in the army. In every direction I saw resistance possible and habitual. I beheld the citizen rendering an obedience that was discriminating and intelligent, examining for himself, and liable to stop at a certain point. I beheld even the tender submission of woman reach its limits, the law taking up her defence, when the authority she obeys commands a wrong. But military obedience is blind and dumb, because at the same time passive and active—receiving its order and executing it—striking with eyes shut, like the Fate of antiquity.

I followed, through all its consequences, this *abnegation* of the soldier, without retreat or condition, and leading him sometimes to tasks of illest omen. Such were my reflections as I walked on at my horse's own pleasure; looking at my watch from time to time, and beholding the road as it stretched along forever in a straight line, varied neither by house nor tree, and in-

ALFRED DE VIGNY

tersecting the plain as far as the horizon, like a yellow stripe on a gray cloth. Sometimes the shifty line was lost in the liquid ground that surrounded it; and when a little brightening of the dull and pale light of the day spread over that most melancholy expanse of land, I saw myself in the midst of a muddy ocean, following a current of clay and plaster.

Examining attentively the yellow line of the road, I observed upon it, at the distance of about a mile, a little black point, which was in motion. I was delighted with the sight—it was somebody. I kept my eyes steadily fixed upon it. I saw that the black point was going in the same direction with myself, toward Lille, and that it went with a zigzag motion, as though with painful toil. I quickened my gait, and gained ground upon the object, which began to lengthen a little and increase in bulk to my sight. Reaching a firmer soil, I resumed a trot, and soon fancied that I could distinguish a little black wagon. I was hungry, and hoped that it was the wagon of a sutler; and, looking upon my poor horse as a vessel, I crowded all sail to arrive at that fortunate island in this sea of mud, where he sometimes sank down above his knees.

When about a hundred yards off, I at last distinguished plainly a little wagon of white wood, covered by a black oilcloth stretched over three hoops. It looked like a little cradle mounted on two wheels. The wheels sank down to the axle-tree; the little mule which drew it was wearisomely led by a man on foot, who held the bridle. I drew near, and took an attentive look at him.

LAURETTE

He was a man of about fifty, moustached, tall and strong, and his back rounded, like that of the old infantry officers who have carried the knapsack. He had also their uniform; and you could see, from under a short and well-worn blue cloak, the epaulette of a brigade commander. His face was rough and hard, but good, as you so often see in the army. He looked at me sideways from under his heavy black eyebrows, and drawing a musket quickly out of the wagon, he cocked it, passing to the other side of the mule, of which he thus made a rampart. Having seen his white cockade, I simply showed him the sleeve of my red coat, when he replaced the musket in the wagon, saying:

“Oh, that’s another matter. I took you for one of those coney who are running after us. Will you take a drop?”

“With all my heart,” I answered, drawing near; “it is four-and-twenty hours since I have tasted one.”

He had round his neck a cocoa-nut, beautifully carved, and made into a bottle, with a silver neck, of which he seemed a little vain. He reached it to me, and I drank a little poor white wine with a great deal of satisfaction, and returned him the cocoa-nut.

“To the health of the King!” said he, drinking; “he has made me an officer of the Legion of Honor, and it is but right that I should follow him to the frontier. And as I have only my epaulette by which to live, I shall then rejoin my battalion. That’s my duty.”

As he thus spoke, to himself as it were, he set his little mule in march again, saying that we had no time to lose; and as I was of the same opinion, I resumed

ALFRED DE VIGNY

my route two or three steps in his rear. I still kept looking at him, but without asking any questions, as I never liked that talkative indiscretion which is so common among us.

We went on in silence for about a mile. As he then stopped to rest his poor little mule, which was really painfully tired, I halted too, and tried to press out the water which made my riding-boots like two reservoirs in which my legs were soaking.

"Your boots begin to stick to your feet?" said he to me.

"It is four nights since I have taken them off."

"Bah! in a week you will think no more of it," he replied, with his hoarse voice. "It is something to be alone in times like these, I can tell you. Do you know what I have got inside there?"

"No," said I.

"It is a woman."

"Ah!" was my answer, with no particular astonishment, as I quietly resumed my route at a walk again. He followed.

"This wretched covering here did not cost me very dear," he resumed, "nor the mule either; but it is all that I need, although this road here is rather a long queue ribbon."

I offered him my horse to mount when he should be tired; and as I only spoke gravely and simply of his equipage, of which he feared the ridiculous appearance, he became suddenly quite at his ease, and approaching my stirrup, gave me a slap on the knee, and said:

LAURETTE

"Come, you are a good fellow, though you are one of *the red*."

I felt in the bitterness of his accent, as he thus designated the four red companies, how many angry prejudices the luxury and rank of these corps of officers had created in the army at large.

"However," he added, "I will not accept your offer, considering that I do not know how to mount a horse, and that, for my part, it is not my business."

"But, Commandant, you superior officers are obliged to."

"Bah! once a year for inspection, and then a hired hack. As for me, I was always a sailor, and afterward in the infantry; so that I know nothing about riding."

He went on for about twenty steps, looking sideways at me, as if expecting a question; but as he heard none, he presently continued himself:

"You are not very inquisitive, that's a fact! That ought to astonish you a little, what I said there."

"I am not often astonished," said I.

"Ah, but if I were to tell you how I came to quit the sea, then we should see."

"Very well," I answered, "why don't you try? That will warm us, and make me forget the rain that is pouring in at my back, and only stopping at my heels."

The good chief of brigade prepared himself deliberately to speak, with all the pleasure of a child. He adjusted his shako on his head, which was covered with black oilcloth, and gave that peculiar shrug of the shoulders, which none can imagine who have not served in

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the infantry—that shrug of the shoulders which the soldier gives to raise his knapsack, and ease its weight for a moment. It is a habit of the soldier, which, when he becomes an officer, remains as a trick. After this jerking movement, he drank a little wine from his flask, administered a kick of encouragement to the little mule, and began.

“You must know then, in the first place, my boy, that I was born at Brest. I began by being troop-boy, gaining my half-ration, and my half-pay, at the age of nine years, as my father was a soldier in the Guards. But as I had a liking for the sea, one fine night when I was at Brest on leave of absence, I hid among the ropes of a merchant-ship bound to the Indies, and was not found until they were out at sea, when the captain preferred making a sailor-boy out of me to throwing me overboard. When the Revolution came on, I had made some headway, and was captain of a neat little trading vessel, having been tossed about the sea, like its foam, for fifteen years. As the old royal navy—a good old navy, faith, it was—found itself suddenly depopulated of its officers, they took their captains from the merchant service. I had had some little brushes with the pirates which I will tell you about some other time, and they gave me the command of a small brig-of-war, named the *Marat*.

“On the 28th of Fructidor, 1797, I received orders to get ready for a voyage to Cayenne. I was to transport there sixty soldiers and a *déporté*, who had remained behind, of the one hundred and ninety-three which the

LAURETTE

frigate *La Decade* had taken on board some days before. I had orders to treat this individual with kindness, and the first letter of the Directory enclosed the second, sealed with three red seals, the middle one of which was of enormous size. I was forbidden to open this letter before reaching the first degree north latitude, and between the 27th and 28th of longitude—that is to say, when about crossing the line. This big letter was of a shape altogether peculiar. It was very long, and so tightly closed that I could not get at a word, either in at the corners or through the envelope. I am not superstitious, but it frightened me, that letter. I placed it in my cabin, under the glass of a poor little English clock, which was nailed up over my berth.

Mine was a sailor's bed, if you know what that is. But what am I talking about?—you have lived at most but sixteen summers; you can never have seen anything of that kind. A queen's chamber can not be so neatly arranged as a sailor's cabin—be it said without boasting. Everything has its own place, and its own nail; nothing can move. The vessel may toss as much as she chooses, without putting anything out of order. The furniture is all made to fit the form of the vessel, and of one's own little room. My bed was a chest; when it was opened, I slept in it; and when it was shut, it was my sofa, and there I smoked my pipe. Sometimes it was my table, and then I sat on one of the little casks in the cabin. My floor was waxed and rubbed like mahogany, and shone like a jewel. A real looking-glass! Oh, what a sweet little cabin it was!—and my brig, too, was not to be sneezed at. There was

ALFRED DE VIGNY

some fine fun on board there, and the voyage began this time pleasantly enough, but for—— But I must not anticipate.

“We had a fine breeze from the N.N.W., and I was busy putting away this letter under the glass of my clock, when my *déporté* entered my cabin; he had by the hand a beautiful young girl of about seventeen, and he told me that he himself was only nineteen. A handsome fellow, though a little too pale, and too fair for a man. He was a man though, and a man who behaved better on this occasion than many an old one would have done—you will see. He had his little wife under his arm: she was as fresh and gay as a child. They looked like two doves. It really was a pleasure to see them.

“So said I:

““Ah, well, young ones, you come to pay a visit to the old captain, eh? That’s kind of you. I am taking you rather far away: but all the better, for we shall have the longer to make one another’s acquaintance. I am sorry to receive Madame with my coat off, but you see I am nailing this big scamp of a letter up here. If you would only help me a little?”

“They were really good little children. The little husband took the hammer, and the little wife the nails, and they would hand them to me, as I asked for them: and she would say, ‘To the right—to the left—Captain!’—all the time laughing, because the knocking made my clock swing. I think I hear her yet, with her little voice, ‘To the right—to the left—Captain!’ She was making fun of me. ‘Ah, ha,’ said I, ‘you little puss,

LAURETTE

I'll make your husband' scold you, you'll see.' Then she jumped upon his neck and kissed him: they were indeed a charming pair, and so our acquaintance began. We were all at once good friends.

"We had a fine passage, too. The weather seemed always made on purpose for us. As I had never had anything but dark faces on board my vessel, I made my two little lovers come to my table every day. It put me in spirits. When we had eaten our biscuit and fish, the little wife and her husband would sit looking at one another, as though they had never seen each other before. Then I would set to laughing with all my might, and making fun of them. They would laugh, too, with me. You would have laughed to have seen us there like three imbeciles, not knowing what was the matter with us. The fact is, it was really pleasant to see them so fond of one another. They were contented anywhere: they found anything which was given them good. Still they were on allowance, like the rest of us. I only added a little Swedish brandy when they dined with me; only a little glass, just to keep up my rank. They slept in a hammock, where the vessel rolled them about like those two pears I have here, in this wet handkerchief. They were lively and contented. I did like you, I asked them no questions; what use was there for me to know their name and their business—me, a traverser of the waves? I carried them from one side of the ocean to the other, as I might have carried two birds of paradise.

"After a month I came to look upon them as my children. Every day when I called them, they came

ALFRED DE VIGNY

and sat near me. The young man wrote on my table (that is to say, on my bed), and when I wished it, he helped me to take my observation; he soon knew how to do it as well as myself—I was quite astonished sometimes. The young woman would sit down upon a barrel and sew.

“One day, when they were fixed so, I said to them: ‘Do you know, my little friends, that we make quite a family picture as we now are? I don’t wish to ask you any questions, but you probably have not any more money than you need, and you are very delicate, both of you, to dig and work, as the convicts at Cayenne do. It’s a wretched country, I can tell you, from the bottom of my heart; but as for me, who am already an old wolf’s skin dried in the sun, I could live there like a lord. If you have, as I rather fancy you have (without wishing to catechise you), ever so little regard for me, I would willingly leave my old brig, which is at best but an old wooden shoe, and establish myself there with you, if you liked it. I have no more family than a dog, and I am tired of it. You would make a nice little company for me. I could help you to many things, and I have got together, honestly enough, quite a snug little affair in the contraband way, on which we might live, and which I would leave to you, when I should come to kick the bucket—to speak politely.’

“They looked at each other with quite a bewildered air, as if they did not think I spoke the truth; and then the little one ran, as she always did, and threw herself on the neck of the other, and sat upon his knees all crimson and weeping. He pressed her very closely in his

LAURETTE

arms, and I saw tears in his eyes too. He gave me his hand, and became even paler than usual. She spoke in a low voice to him, and her long fair hair fell loose upon his shoulders. Its twist had got loosed like a cable suddenly unrolling, for she was as lively as a fish. That hair, if you had seen it!—it was just like gold. As they continued to speak together in a low voice, he kissing her forehead from time to time, I became impatient.

“‘Well, does that suit you?’ said I at length.

“‘But—but—Captain—you are very good, but you can not live with convicts—and—’ He cast his eyes down as he spoke.

“‘As for me,’ said I, ‘I don’t know what you have done to be transported for. You will tell me that some of these days—or never, if you choose. You don’t look as if you had a very heavy conscience, and I am sure that I have done many a worse thing than you, in my life, my poor innocent little souls. Now, so long as you are under my guard, I shall not let you go, you may be sure of that; I would rather wring your necks like two pigeons. But the epaulette once off, I know no longer admiral nor anything else.’

“‘The fact is,’ he answered, mournfully shaking his brown head, though a little powdered, as was still the fashion of that day—‘the fact is, I think it would be dangerous for you, Captain, to seem to know us. We laugh because we are young; we look happy because we love one another; but I have many a miserable moment when I think of the future, and I know not what will become of my poor Laura.’ And he again pressed the head of his young wife to his bosom.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“‘That was what I ought to say to the Captain,’ added he, ‘was it not, my child? You would have said the same thing, wouldn’t you?’

“‘I took my pipe, and rose, because I felt that my eyes were becoming somewhat moist, and that doesn’t become me very well.

“‘Come, come,’ said I, ‘this will all clear up by and by; if the smoke of my pipe incommodes Madame, she must go away.’

“‘She raised her face all scarlet and wet with tears, like a child which has been scolded.

“‘Besides,’ said she, looking at my clock, ‘you forget *that* there—the letter?’

“‘I felt something that struck home to me at these words—something like a sudden pain at the roots of my hair as she spoke.

“‘*Pardieu!* I did not think of that,’ said I. ‘This is a pretty piece of business, to be sure. If we had only crossed the first degree of north latitude, nothing would be left for me but to jump overboard. Can’t I get tolerably happy, but this child here must remind me of that big scamp of a letter!’

“‘I looked quickly at my sea-chart, and when I saw that we had yet a week to sail, my head was relieved but not my heart—I knew not why.

“‘It’s no joking matter with the Directory about the article obedience,’ said I. ‘Well, I am all straight this time. Time has passed so quickly, that I had completely forgotten that.’

“‘Well, sir, there we remained, all three of us, with our noses in the air, looking up at that letter, as if it

LAURETTE

could speak. What struck me forcibly was that the sun, as it shone through the bull's-eye, fell upon the glass of the clock, and lighting the spot, made the great red seal and the other small ones appear like the features of a face in the midst of fire.

"Wouldn't one say that its eyes were coming out of its head?" said I, to amuse them.

"'Oh, dearest!' said the girl, shuddering, 'they look like spots of blood!'

"'Nonsense,' said her husband, taking her in his arms, 'you deceive yourself, Laura; it looks like a wedding invitation. Come and rest yourself—come! Why do you trouble yourself about that letter?'

"They hurried off as if a ghost were after them, and went on deck.

"I remained alone with the big letter, and I remember that, as I smoked my pipe, I kept my gaze fixed on it as if it had riveted my eyes by meeting them, like those of a snake. Its great pale face—that third seal, larger than the eyes—open, ravenous, like the jaws of a wolf—all that put me in a very bad humor. I took my coat and hung it over the clock, that I might see neither the hour nor that d—— of a letter.

"I went to finish my pipe on deck, and remained there till night. We were then about on a line with the Cape de Verde islands. The *Marat* cut through the water, wind astern, over ten knots with ease. The night was the most beautiful one I have ever seen near the tropic. The moon was just rising at the horizon, large as a sun; the sea divided it in the middle, and became all white, like a sheet of snow covered over with little

ALFRED DE VIGNY

diamonds. I looked at it all from the bench where I sat smoking. The officer of the watch and the sailors did not speak, and, like me, were looking at the shadow of the brig on the water. I was glad to hear nothing; I like silence and order. I had forbidden all noise and all fires. Nevertheless, I perceived a small red streak almost under my feet. I should immediately have put myself in a passion, but as it came from the cabin of my little convicts, I wished to satisfy myself what they were about before I got angry. I had only to lean over and I could see through the skylight of the little cabin, and I looked down. The young girl was on her knees at her prayers. There was a little lamp which cast its light upon her. She was in her night-dress, and I saw from above, her bare shoulders, her little naked feet, and her long fair hair all afloat. I thought I would retire; but, nonsense! said I to myself—an old soldier like me, what harm is there?—and so I remained.

“Her husband was seated on a small trunk, his head on his hands, watching her as she prayed. She raised her face as though to heaven, and I saw her large blue eyes wet like those of a Magdalen. While she was praying he took the ends of her long hair and kissed them without disturbing her. When she had finished she made the sign of the cross, smiling as though she were just going to Paradise. I saw him also make the sign of the cross after her, but as if he were ashamed of it. And, indeed, for a man, such a thing is a little singular.

“She rose, kissed him, and stretched herself the first in the hammock, where he threw her in as they put to

LAURETTE

bed a child in a cradle. The heat was stifling, and she seemed to find pleasure in the rocking motion of the vessel. Her tiny white feet were crossed and raised to the level of her head, and her whole person wrapped in her long white dress. Oh! she was a perfect little love.

“‘Dearest,’ said she, already half asleep, ‘are you not sleepy? Do you know it is very late?’

“He remained still with his head in his hands, without answering. This made her a little anxious, the sweet child, and she raised her pretty head out of the hammock, like a bird out of its nest, and looked at him with her lips parted, not venturing to speak again.

“At last he said: ‘Oh! dear Laura! the nearer we approach to America, I can not help it, but so much the sadder I become. I know not why it is, but I feel as if this voyage will have been the happiest part of our life.’

“‘And so it seems to me,’ said she, ‘and I wish we might never arrive.’

“He looked at her, pressing his hands together with an expression of feeling you can not imagine.

“‘And yet, my angel, you always weep when you pray to God,’ said he, ‘and that distresses me sadly, for I well know of whom you are thinking, and I fear you are sorry for what you have done.’

“‘I sorry!’ said she, with a look of much pain—‘I sorry to have followed you, dearest! Do you think that because I had been yours so short a time, I loved you the less? Is one not a woman and does one not know one’s duty at seventeen? My mother and my sisters, did they not say that it was my duty to follow

ALFRED DE VIGNY

you to Guiana? Did they not say I was doing nothing wonderful? I am only surprised that you should have been so touched by it, dearest: it was all perfectly natural. And now I do not know how you can imagine that I regret anything, when I am with you, to help you to live, or to die if you die.'

"She said all this with so sweet a voice, one would have thought it was music. I was a good deal moved by it, and said to myself: 'Good little wife—yes, indeed!'

"The young man sighed with grief as he stamped on the floor with his foot, and kissed a pretty little hand and a bare arm which she extended to him.

"'Oh, Laurette, my own Laurette!' said he, 'when I think, that if we had only delayed our marriage for a few days, I should have been seized alone, and sent off alone, I can not forgive myself.'

"Then the beautiful girl stretched her beautiful white arms, bare to the shoulders, out of the hammock, and caressed his brow, his hair, his eyes, taking his head between her hands as though to carry it away and hide it in her bosom. She smiled like a child, and said a thousand sweet little womanly things, such as I, for my part, had never heard anything of the kind before. She shut his mouth playfully with her fingers, so as to have all the speaking to herself, and wiping his eyes with her long hair, as with a handkerchief, she said: 'And is it not a great deal better to have a wife with you who loves you—say, dearest? I am perfectly content to go to Cayenne; I shall see savages and cocoa-nut trees, like those of "Paul and Virginia" sha'n't I? We will

LAURETTE

each plant our own. We shall see who will be the best gardener. And we will make a little hut for us two. I will work all day and all night, if you wish. I am strong; see—look at my arms; see, I could almost lift you. Don't laugh at me. And, besides, I am excellent at embroidering, and is there not some city thereabouts where embroiderers are wanted? And then I will give lessons in music and drawing, if they choose; and if they know how to read there, you can write, you know.'

"I remember that the poor fellow was in such despair that a loud cry escaped him as she spoke thus. 'To write!' he exclaimed, 'to write!' and he seized his right hand with his left, pressing it tightly at the wrist. 'Ah! to write! Why have I ever known how to write! To write is the trade of fools. I believed in the liberty of the press—where were my senses? And, to do what? To print five or six poor ideas, commonplace enough, read only by those who like them, and thrown into the fire by those who hate them, serving no other end but to bring persecution upon us. As for me, it is of little consequence; but you, beautiful angel, scarcely four days a wife, what had you done! Tell me, tell me, I entreat of you, how I came to suffer you to carry your goodness so far as to follow me here! Do you know where you are, poor girl? and whither you are going? You will soon, my child, be sixteen hundred leagues away from your mother and your sisters. And for me! all this for me!'

"She hid her head for a moment in the hammock, and I, from above, could see she was weeping; but he

ALFRED DE VIGNY

from below did not perceive it, and when she uncovered her face it was already brightened by a smile, to enliven and cheer him.

“‘In truth, we are not very rich just now,’ said she, bursting into a laugh; ‘see, here is my purse, I have only one single louis. And you!’

“‘He began also to laugh like a child: ‘Faith! I had a crown left, but I gave it to the little boy who carried your trunk.’

“‘Oh, well! what difference does that make?’ said she, snapping her little white fingers like castanets; ‘people are never so merry as when they have nothing; and, besides, have I not yet in reserve the two diamond rings that my mother gave me? Those are good everywhere, and for everything, are they not? Whenever you choose we will sell them. And, besides, I am sure that that dear old soul, the Captain, does not tell us all his good intentions for us, and that he knows very well what is in the letter. I am sure it is a recommendation for us to the Governor of Cayenne.’

“‘Perhaps so,’ said he, ‘who knows?’

“‘And then,’ added his little wife, ‘you are so good that I am sure the government has only exiled you for a short time, but has no thought of harm against you.’

“‘She had said that so sweetly, when she called me ‘that dear old soul the Captain,’ that I was quite touched and melted, and I rejoiced in my very heart that she had perhaps guessed truly. They began anew to embrace one another; and I stamped loudly on the deck to make them stop.

“‘Eh! how now, my little friends,’ I cried, ‘the order

LAURETTE

is to put out all the lights on board the ship; blow out your lamp, if you please.'

"They obeyed, and I heard them laughing and talking below, in the dark, like school-children. I, for my part, relit my pipe and walked the deck by myself. All the tropical stars were at their posts, large as little moons. I watched them, and breathed an air which seemed fresh and sweet. I said to myself that the good little folks had certainly guessed the truth, and my spirits mounted at the thought. I would have wagered anything that one of the five Directors had changed his mind, and recommended them to my care. I did not very well explain to myself the how or the why of the matter, because there are affairs of State which I for my part never understood; but I fully believed, it, and without knowing why, I was made happy by it.

"I took my little night lantern and went to look at the letter under my old uniform. It had altogether a different air now; it seemed to smile, and the seals to be the color of roses. I had no longer any suspicion of its good intentions, and gave it a little nod of friendship.

"However, notwithstanding all that, I hung my old coat over it; I was tired of it. We thought no more of looking at it for some days, and we were very merry. But as we approached the first degree of latitude, we began to leave off talking.

"One fine morning I awoke, surprised enough to feel no motion of the ship. The fact is, I sleep with only one eye shut, as they say, and as I missed the tossing, I opened them both. We had got into a dead calm, and it was under the first degree of north latitude and

ALFRED DE VIGNY

the twentieth of longitude. I put my head on deck; the sea was as smooth as if it were of oil, and the open sails hung down glued to the masts, like empty balloons. I immediately said to myself, as I gave a side-long glance at the letter: 'Very well, I shall have plenty of time to read you,' and waited till the evening, till sunset. But it had to be done sooner or later, so I uncovered the clock, and drew from under it the sealed order. Well, sir, I held it in my hand for a quarter of an hour, without being able to open it. At last I said, *This is too bad!* and broke the three seals with one movement of my thumb, and as for the big red seal, I rubbed it to powder. When I had read it, I rubbed my eyes, thinking they must have deceived me.

"I read the letter over again from the beginning to the end; I read it through; I read it all over again and again. I began again at the last line and went up to the first; I could not believe it. My legs shook a little under me; I felt a peculiar quivering of the skin of my face, and I rubbed my cheeks with rum, and put some in the hollow of my hands. I was really ashamed of myself for being such a child—but it was only the affair of a moment. I went on deck to take a little air.

"Laurette was that day so pretty, that I would not go near her. She had on a little simple white dress, her arms bare to her neck, and her long hair flowing, as she always wore it. She was amusing herself with dipping her other dress into the sea, from the end of a cord, and laughed to see that the ocean was as tranquil and pure as a spring of which she could see the bottom.

LAURETTE

“‘Come and see the sand! come quick!’ she cried and her husband leaned upon her and bent over, and did not look at the water, for he was looking at her with a touching air of tenderness. I made a sign to the young man to come to speak to me on the quarter-deck. She turned round—I don’t know how I looked, but she let her rope drop, and grasped him convulsively by the arm, saying, ‘Oh, don’t go! he is so pale!’ That might well be; it was enough to make one turn pale. Still he came toward me on the quarter-deck. She stood leaning against the main-mast, following us with her eyes, as we walked up and down without a word. I lit a cigar, which I found bitter, and spit it out into the water. He watched my eye; I took him by the arm—I was choking—upon my word I was choking.

“‘Come, come, now,’ said I at length, ‘my little friend, tell me something of your history. What the d—— have you done to those five hounds of lawyers, who are there like five pieces of a king. They seem to owe you a heavy grudge. It’s very queer.’

“He shrugged his shoulders, bending his head down—with such a sweet smile, poor boy!—and said:

“‘Oh! Captain, nothing much, depend upon it. Three satirical verses upon the Directory, that is all.’

“‘It isn’t possible!’ said I.

“‘Oh, yes, indeed! and the verses were not even very good ones. I was arrested the 15th of Fructidor, and taken to La Force; tried on the 16th, and sentenced first to death, then, through clemency, to transportation.’

“‘That’s queer,’ said I; ‘these Directors must be

ALFRED DE VIGNY

very susceptible fellows, for that letter you know of orders me to shoot you.'

"He did not answer, and smiled with a manly face enough for a boy of nineteen. He only looked at his wife, and wiped his forehead, on which stood big drops of sweat; I had as many on my face, too, and others in my eyes. I continued:

"'It seems those citizens did not wish to do your business on shore; they thought that at sea it would not be so much noticed. But it's very hard for me! It's all of no use that you are such a fine fellow, I can't escape from it; the sentence of death is there complete, and the order for the execution signed and sealed; there's nothing omitted.'

"He bowed very politely, though his face was crimsoned, and said, with a voice as sweet as usual: 'I ask for nothing, Captain; I should be grieved to make you fail in your duty. I should only like to speak a moment to Laurette, and to entreat you to protect her, in case she should survive me—which I do not think she will.'

"'Ah! as for that, it is but right, my boy; and, if you have no objections, I will take her to her own family, on my return to France, and only leave her when she wishes to see me no more. But it strikes me you need not fear that she will recover from this blow—poor little soul!'

"He took my two hands, pressed them, and said:

"'My dear Captain, you suffer more than I do, from what yet remains to be done. I feel it indeed, but it can not be helped. I rely upon you to preserve for her the little that belongs to me, to watch over her, and to

LAURETTE

see that she receives whatever her aged mother may leave her, will you not?—to guard her life, her honor; and to see that her health is also well taken care of, will you not? You see,’ he added, in a lower voice, ‘I must tell you that she is very delicate, and often so much troubled by her chest as to faint several times a day. She must always keep herself well covered. In a word, you will take the place, as much as possible, of her father, her mother, and me, will you not? I should be glad if she could keep the rings her mother gave her. But if it is necessary that they should be sold for her, be it so. My poor Laurette!—see how beautiful she is!’

“As this began to be a little too tender, I became tired of it, and set to knitting my brows. I had spoken cheerfully to him so as not to weaken him, but I could stand it no longer. ‘Enough,’ said I, ‘we understand each other. Go and speak to her, and let us make haste.’

“I pressed his hand as a friend, and as he did not let it go, but kept looking at me with a singular expression, I added: ‘I’ll tell you what it is, if I had any advice to give you, it would be to say nothing to her about that matter. We will arrange the thing without her expecting it, nor you either; make yourself easy—that’s my affair.’

““Ah!’ said he, ‘I did not know that. That will certainly be better. Besides, those farewells!—those farewells!—they weaken one.’

““Yes, yes,’ said I, ‘don’t make a child of yourself, that’s much the best way. Don’t kiss her, if you can help it; if you do, you are lost.’

ALFRED DE VIGNY

"I gave him another good grasp of the hand, and left him. Oh! all this was very hard for me!

"He seemed to me to keep the secret well; for they walked arm in arm for a quarter of an hour, and then returned to the edge of the water to take the rope and the dress which one of the cabin boys had fished up.

"Night came on suddenly. It was the moment I had resolved to seize. But, that moment has lasted me till the present time, and I shall drag it along all my life, like a cannon-ball."

Here the old Commendant was obliged to stop, and I took care not to speak, for fear of turning his ideas out of their channel. He began again, striking his breast:

"That moment, I assure you, I can't understand it yet. I felt the deepest rage seize upon my whole heart, and at the same time something or other, I don't know what, was forcing me to obey, and pushing me forward. I summoned the officers and said to them:

"'Come! a boat in the water, since we are now executioners. Put that girl into it, and keep rowing off until you hear the report of firing; you will then return.'

"The idea of obeying a piece of paper that way!—for after all it was but that. There must have been something in the air which forced me on. I caught a glimpse of that young man—oh! it was horrible to see!—kneeling before his Laurette, and kissing her knees and her feet. Wasn't it a hard case for me? I shouted like a madman, 'Separate them!—we are all a set of wretches—separate them! The poor Republic is a dead body—Directors, Directory, vermin all! I quit the sea for-

LAURETTE

ever! I'm not afraid of all your lawyers! Let them tell them what I say—what do I care?' Oh! but I did care for them! I would have wished to have held them in my grasp, and shot them all five, the scoundrels! Oh, yes! I would have done it. I cared for my life about as much as for that water that's pouring there—yes, indeed—as if I cared for that—a life like mine—ah, yes, indeed—mere life—bah——”

And the voice of the Commandant gradually went out, and became as indistinct as his words; and he walked on, biting his lips and knitting his brows in a terrific and fierce abstraction. He had little twitching movements, and gave his mule knocks with the scabbard of his sword, as if he wished to kill it. And what astonished me was to see the yellow skin of his face flush to a deep red. He undid his coat on his breast, and threw it violently open, baring it to the rain and the wind.

“I can well understand,” said I, as though he had finished his story, “how, after so cruel an adventure, you should have taken an abhorrence to your business.”

“Oh! as for the business, are you crazy?” said he, quickly; “it is not the business. No captain of a vessel will ever be forced to turn executioner, except when governments of assassins and thieves get on foot, who will take advantage of the habit a poor man has of always obeying, blindly obeying with a miserable mechanical compulsion in spite of his very self.”

At the same time he drew out of his pocket a red handkerchief, and began to weep like a child. I stopped

ALFRED DE VIGNY

for a moment, as if to arrange my stirrup, and hanging back behind his wagon, walked some time after him, for I felt that he would be mortified if I perceived too plainly his streaming tears.

I had judged rightly, for in about a quarter of an hour he also came behind the poor little wagon, and asked me if I had any razors in my portmanteau; to which I simply answered that, as I had no beard yet, they would be very unnecessary to me. But he did not care about that; it was to speak of something else. I soon was glad to see that he was returning to his story, for he suddenly said:

“You never have seen a ship, have you?”

“I never have,” answered I, “excepting in the Panorama of Paris, and I would not trust much to the nautical science I derived from that.”

“Then you do not know what the catheads are?”

“I have not the least idea,” said I.

“They are a kind of beams projecting in front from the bows of the vessel, from which the anchor is thrown off. When a man is to be shot, he is usually placed there,” he added in a low tone.

“Oh! I understand, so that he then falls into the water?”

He did not answer, but began to describe the small boats of a vessel. And then, and without any order in his ideas, he continued his tale, with that affected air of unconcern which a long service in the army invariably gives, because you must show your inferiors your contempt of danger, your contempt of men, your contempt of life, your contempt of death, and even your

LAURETTE

contempt of yourself. And all this generally hides, under a rough envelope, very deep feelings. The roughness of a soldier is like a mask of iron over a noble face; like the stone dungeon that encloses a royal prisoner.

“These boats hold more than eight rowers,” he continued. “They seized Laurette and placed her in one, before she had either time to cry or to speak. Ah! this is a thing which no honest man can ever find comfort for when it has been his doing. You may talk as you please, one never forgets such an affair. Ah, what weather this is!—what the d—— could have possessed me to tell you all this? Whenever I begin this, I can’t stop. It is a story which makes me fairly drunk like the Jurançon wine. Ah, what weather it is! My cloak is soaked through!

“I was telling you, I believe, still about that little Laurette! Poor girl!—What clumsy people there are in the world! My sailors were so stupid as to take the boat straight ahead of the brig. After all, it’s true one can not foresee everything. For my own part, I had counted on the night to hide the matter, and did not think about the flash a dozen muskets would make, fired at once. And the fact is that from the boat she saw her husband fall into the water—shot. If there is a God up there, He only knows how what I am going to tell you took place; as for me, I know nothing about it, but it was seen and heard, as I see and hear you. At the moment of the fire, she raised her hand to her forehead, as if a ball had struck her there, and sat down in the boat without fainting, without screaming, and

ALFRED DE VIGNY

returned to the brig just when they wanted her, and just as they wanted her. I went to her, and talked to her a long time, the best I could. She seemed to be listening to me, and looked me in the face, rubbing her forehead with her hands. But she did not understand; and her face was quite pale, and her forehead red. She trembled all over, as if she was afraid of everybody. She has remained so ever since—in just the same state, poor little soul!—an idiot, or imbecile, as it were, or crazy, or whatever you please. Nobody has ever drawn a word out of her, except when she asks to have what she has in her head taken out.

“From that hour I became as melancholy as herself, and I felt something in me which said: ‘*Stand by her till the end of thy days, and watch over her.*’ I have done it. When I returned to France, I asked leave to pass with my rank into the army, having taken an aversion to the sea, for the innocent blood I had cast into it. I sought out Laurette’s family. Her mother was dead, and her sisters, to whom I brought her crazy, did not want the trouble of her, and offered to place her at Charanton. I turned my back upon them, and kept her with me.

“If you want to see her, comrade, you have only to say the word. Here—hold on. Ho!—ho!—you beast!”

And he stopped his poor mule, who seemed delighted that I had asked that question. At the same time he lifted the oilcloth cover of the little wagon, as if to arrange the straw, which nearly filled it, and I saw something very mournful. I saw two blue eyes, of enormous

LAURETTE

size, indeed, but of admirable shape, starting out from a face that was thin and lengthened, covered over with waves of loose, fair hair. In fact, I saw nothing but those two eyes which seemed the whole of that poor Roman, for all the rest was dead. Her forehead was red, and her cheeks hollow and pale, with a bluish tinge. She was bent double in the midst of the straw, so that only her two knees were seen out of it, on which she was playing dominoes all by herself. She looked at us for a moment, trembled for a long time, smiled a little at me, and went on with her game. She seemed to be trying to see how her right hand could beat her left.

“You see, she has been playing that game for a month,” said the *chef-de-bataillon*, “to-morrow it will, perhaps, be another game, which will last a long time. It’s queer, eh?”

At the same time he set about arranging the oilcloth of his shako, which the rain had somewhat disordered.

“Poor Laurette!” said I, “ah, you have lost the game forever!”

I neared my horse to the wagon, and stretched out my hand to her; she gave me hers mechanically, and smiled with a great deal of sweetness. I observed with surprise two diamond rings on her long, thin fingers. I supposed they were still her mother’s rings, and wondered how their poverty had left them there. For the world I would not have made a remark upon it to the old Commandant, but as he followed my eyes, and saw them fixed on Laurette’s fingers, he said, with a certain air of pride:

ALFRED DE VIGNY

“They are pretty large diamonds, are they not? They might bring a good price if necessary. But I was never willing that she should part from them, poor child! If you but touch them, she weeps; and she never leaves them off. Otherwise she never complains; and now and then she can sew. I have kept my word to her poor young husband, and, to tell the truth, I have never repented it. I have never left her, and have always said she was my crazy daughter. As such she has always been respected. These things are managed better in the army than they imagine in Paris. She went through all the wars of the Emperor with me, and I have always kept her out of harm’s way. She has always been kept warm; with straw and a little wagon that is never impossible. She has had pretty comfortable things about her; and as I was a *chef-de-bataillon*, with good pay, my legion of honor pension, and the Napoleon month, the pay of which was double in those times, I was always well off, and she gave me no trouble. On the contrary, her pretty childish ways often amused the officers of the Light Seventh.”

He then approached her, and slapped her gently on the shoulder, as he would have done to his little mule.

“Well, now, my daughter, talk a little to the Lieutenant. Come—let’s see—a little sign of the head!”

She busied herself anew with her dominoes.

“Oh!” said he, “she is a little cross to-day, because it rains. However, she never takes cold. Crazy people never get sick, you know; it’s very convenient in that respect. At the Beresina, and through all the retreat from Moscow, she went bare-headed. Come, my

LAURETTE

dear child, play on, play on—don't let us disturb you; take your own way, then, Laurette."

She took hold of the coarse, black hand which he rested on her shoulder, and carried it timidly to her lips, like a poor slave. I felt my heart sink at that kiss, and turned my bridle quickly away.

"Shall we not resume our march, Commandant?" said I, "it will be night before we reach Béthune."

The Commandant carefully scraped the mud from his boots with the end of his sword; he then mounted on the step of the wagon, drew forward over Laurette's head the hood of a little cloak she had on, took off his own black silk cravat, and put it round the neck of his adopted daughter; after which he gave a kick to his mule, and saying, "Get along, you lazy beast!" we continued our journey.

The rain was still falling gloomily; we found on the road only dead horses, abandoned, with their saddles. The gray sky and gray earth stretched out without end; a sort of dead light, a pale wet sun was sinking behind some large windmills, which did not turn, and we fell back into a long silence.

I looked at the old Commandant; he walked on with long strides and untiring energy, while his mule could hardly keep along, and even my horse began to droop his head. The brave old fellow took off his shako from time to time, to wipe his bald forehead and the few gray hairs on his head, or his white moustache from which the rain was dripping. He did not think anything about the effect his recital might have produced on me; he had made himself out neither better nor worse

ALFRED DE VIGNY

than he was; he had not deigned to draw himself; he did not think of himself; and at the end of a quarter of an hour he began on the same key a much longer story of a campaign of Marshal Masséna, in which he had formed his battalion in a square against some cavalry or other. I did not listen to him, although he grew quite warm, in endeavoring to prove to me the superiority of infantry over cavalry.

Night came on; we did not get along fast; the mud became thicker and deeper. Nothing on the road, and nothing at the end of it. We stopped at the foot of a dead tree, the only tree on the road; he bestowed his first cares on his mule, as I did on my horse; he then looked into the wagon, as a mother would have done into the cradle of her child. I heard him say:

"Come, my dear, put this overcoat on your feet, and try to sleep. Come, that is right! she has not been touched by a drop of rain. Ah, the d——! she has broken my watch which I had left round her neck. Oh, my poor silver watch! Come, come, it's no matter, my child, try to sleep. The fine weather will soon come back again. It's queer, she always has a fever—that's the way with crazy people—see, here is some chocolate for you, my child."

He rested the wagon against the tree, and we sat down on the wheels, under cover from the everlasting rain, each with a little loaf,—a poor supper.

"I am sorry we have nothing but this," said he, "but it is better than horseflesh baked under ashes, with powder for salt, such as we had in Russia. The poor little soul, I must always give her the best I have;

LAURETTE

you see, I put it on one side for her; she can not bear to suffer the vicinity of a man, since the affair of the letter. I am old, and she seems to fancy me to be her father; yet she would strangle me, if I attempted to kiss her, even upon her forehead. Their early education must always leave some impression on them, for I have never seen her once forget to veil herself like a nun. It's queer, eh?"

While he was thus talking to me, we heard her sigh and say: "*Take away this lead! take away this lead!*" I rose in spite of myself; he made me sit down again.

"Stay, stay," said he; "it is no matter. She says that all her life, because she always fancies she feels a ball in her head. That does not hinder her doing all that she is told to do, and that with the greatest sweetness."

I listened mournfully to him, but without any reply. I calculated that, from 1797 to 1815, eighteen years had thus passed with this man. I remained a long while in silence by his side, trying to explain to myself such a character, and such a fate. I then abruptly gave him an enthusiastic shake of the hand; he did not know what to make of it.

"You are a worthy man," said I.

"What for?" he answered. "Because of this poor woman? You see perfectly well, my boy, that was a duty." And he began to talk again about Masséna.

The next morning, by daylight, we arrived at Béthune, an ugly little fortified town, the ramparts of which, in narrowing their circle, seemed to have squeezed the

ALFRED DE VIGNY

houses together upon each other. All was in confusion; it was the moment of an *alerte*. The inhabitants were taking the white flags from the windows, and sewing the tricolors to their houses; the arms were beating the *générale*, and the trumpets sounded *to horse!* by order of the Duke de Berry. The long Picard wagons carrying the Hundred Swiss and their baggage, the cannons of the body-guard hurrying to their ramparts, the carriages of the princes, the mustering squadrons of the red companies, blocked up the town. The sight of the gendarmes of the King, and the mousquetaires, made me forget my old travelling companion. I rejoined my company, and lost sight of the little wagon and its poor occupant in the crowd. To my great regret, it was forever that I lost them.

It was the first time in my life that I had read the depths of the true heart of a soldier. This adventure revealed to me an aspect of human nature which I had not seen before, and which the nation little knows and ill rewards. I placed it from that time high in my esteem. I have often since sought around me for a man like that one, and capable of such an entire and careless abnegation of self. During the fourteen years I have lived in the army, it is only there, and above all in the poor and despised ranks of the infantry, that I have found those men of an antique stamp carrying out the feeling of *duty* to all its possible consequences; knowing neither remorse for obedience, nor shame for poverty; simple in their manners, and in their speech; proud of the glory of the nation, but careless of their own, shutting themselves up cheerfully in their own

LAURETTE

obscurity, to divide with the unfortunate the black bread they pay for with their blood.

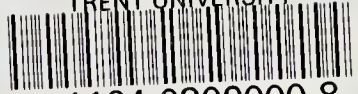
I remained long ignorant of what had become of my poor brigade-chief, especially as he had not told me his name, and I had not asked him. One day, however, at a coffee-house, I believe in 1825, an old captain of infantry to whom I was describing him, as we were waiting for parade, said:

“Eh, *pardieu*, I knew that poor devil! He was a brave fellow—he was killed by a ball at Waterloo. And he had, in fact, left with the baggage a crazy girl, whom we took to the hospital at Amiens, as we went to the army of the Loire. She died there raving mad, at the end of three days.”

“I can readily imagine it,” said I, “she had lost her foster-father.”

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